

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER D

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

RESPONSES TO INITIAL CONSULTATION

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TABLE 1 - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD TOWN COUNCIL – INITIAL CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED VIA WEB FORM

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W1	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	This area is Thorley and the area where I live has been part of Thorley for 20 years. We feel part of the rural Thorley area and the parish of Thorley.	
W2	Local resident	BS South	Yes	Thorley	Bigger voice to discuss or promote local Thorley issues.	
W3	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W4	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Parish Councils in general, and certainly Thorley Parish Council, are the last bastion of politics-free involvement in local administration, unlike town and district councils where political considerations override residents' concerns. The proposed 'Stortford South Development' is in the green belt with no outstanding reason to remove the green belt (except politics) and it would occupy about half the land mass of Thorley Parish Council, with the proposed change also taking some (or all?) of Thorley Street. This would effectively wipe out the parish and obviously the Parish Council. Is that local democracy? If you don't know the answer, it is a resounding NO.	
W5	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley		
W6	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	The green belt site affected by this proposal has been under threat of development for years. I have lived in the town for over 40 years and enough is enough. Please stop over developing the town. Bishops Stortford council is not worthy of controlling anymore of the open spaces in our town, all you will	

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					do is give permission for more building work as soon as you get hold of it. Please stop and leave well alone.	
W7	Local resident	BS Silverleys	No	Thorley	I believe this is a cynical exercise to ensure that the District Plan can change the Green Belt boundaries. This is not supported by Thorley Parish Council and should not go ahead. There are no coherent reasons for making any changes to boundaries and they should remain as they are.	
W8	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	I strongly oppose the proposal to incorporate the area marked A into Bishop's Stortford Parish. The Parish of Thorley has a rich history and a distinct identity from Bishop's Stortford Town. Despite development of Thorley over the last 50 years, old Thorley (covering the area near St James' church, Thorley Street and Twyford/Pig Lane) still has a distinctive 'village' feel with a 'village' sense of community. Where I live (Pig Lane) is a rural area which has different needs and identity from the town. Our family (my husband and I and our 3 young children, all under 7) enjoy the privileges of living in such a community with wildlife and natural beauty on our doorstep. We cherish our rural way of life, which is quite different from our Stortford friends. We know our neighbours very well, who also feel strongly about our separate identity from the town as we have differing needs and concerns. As a member of OTTRA (Old Thorley and Twyford Residents Association) I believe it important to preserve our community and our identity. I absolutely oppose any attempt to incorporate us into the town - we are part of the Green Belt and should stay that way, distinct and separate from the rapidly expanding urbanisation of Stortford!	

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W9	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley		
W10	Local resident/ chair of youth group in Thorley	BS Central	No	Thorley	This move is merely to effect an urban expansion of Bishop's Stortford, which if Thorley remains a village cannot occur. The residents of Thorley and many of those who live in Bishops Stortford do not want this 'urban expansion' and increase in housing which the town cannot cope with.	
W11	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I love living in the Thorley area and see no reason for the boundary changing. I see any changes as Hertford Council's underhand, sneaky way of trying to find a way round getting permission to build on the Green Belt land which is literally on my door step, a beautiful space that I see from my kitchen window and the main reason I chose to live here. The Town is struggling to cope with increased numbers of people as it is. Thorley is perfect as it is, I see no reason why any honest Bishop's Stortford resident would want to change it. We have all voted/protested many times in the past, and had planning on this land refused, why would you not respect our views? There needs to be more transparency from the council when dealing with Thorley resident's lives and local area. Please leave the boundaries as they are!	
W12	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Don't know	This is only being proposed to pass the Whittington Way development which will be a total disaster for our immediate area. Traffic is already dire here in the mornings, we do not need any more expansion.	
W13	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley		

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W14	Local resident	BS Silverleys	No	Thorley	I feel like this is a cover up for the council to build on Greenbelt land in Thorley which I completely disagree with. There should be no more building on farm land or Greenbelt land.	
W15	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	This is a land grab by EHDC and BSTC to stop objections by Thorley Parish and much of Bishops Stortford residents to unwarranted development BISH5 Green Belt, and I totally support the objection and case made by our civic federation	Will leave my view up to those who live there to decide not EHDC
W16	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Thorley has its own community and having visited Thorley church on numerous Christmas masses, you see the local people and how they relate to the parish of Thorley. Example being of the Christmas lambs from the nativity play making visits to the local parishes family members. If more houses were to be built, with an addition of a school then this would add additional traffic thoroughfare through London Rd, Whittington Rd and Thorley Hill Rd traffic lights are grid locked on numerous occasions currently. There needs to be access to the M11 from the south of Bishops Stortford. Without this, there is no ring road and all traffic traverses through the town. Issues or the closure of the M11, then traffic gets directed through the town along London Rd. The internal infrastructure to Bishops Stortford cannot currently cope (this is without the new homes currently being built in the northern area of Stortford). So, if we expand the southern area as well, with additional homes, then we will have enormous problems with movement within the town.	
W17	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W18	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	We don't want you to fill the lovely countryside that we enjoy every day. As the mother of a young family it is important for my family to see the beauty of England and not a sprawling housing estate. Keep the green fields green. Any more construction will bring the town to a halt.	
W19	Local resident	Thorley Rural	No	Thorley		
W20	Local employee/business person	BS South	No	Thorley	I would prefer if Thorley retained its village status and I'm unhappy with the amount of housing development in town/locally as insufficient infra structure exist. My family can't get Dr's appointments, the roads are clogged with traffic and in disrepair/insufficient schools/poor shopping options & parking/not much for the youngsters to do. Lived in B/S & Thorley area for around 34 years and town grown too large without the basics being put in.	
W21	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Leave the boundaries as they are and do not develop land off Whittington Way.	
W22	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Residents of Thorley Park associate highly with the village – our parish church is a high point and the peace and tranquillity of Sunday walks down the lane and around the farmlands is exactly why so many of us moved here in the first place. Village life brings a historic benefit for all of us and an extremely well utilised escape from the concrete and sprawl of mindless development. It is essential that the village essence of Thorley Village remains exactly that and that it isn't swallowed up in an urban sprawl that forever changes the aesthetic nature of the area we all enjoy. The whole of neighbouring Thorley Park benefits from our Parish church and the rambling pathways and bridleways that still maintain a "Country" feel to this age old	

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					Market Town. Leisure is also a staple need for hard working people and Thorley Village provides the historic and greatly needed recreation for cyclists, horse riders and ramblers alike. It is mindless destruction to take PARADISE AND PUT UP A PARKING LOT!	
W23	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	In the quote below you have answered your own question, Thorley wishes and feels it is important as a village to remain under their own control and not Bishops Stortford's. Thorley must remain as a village - once you remove this status you can build and destroy the community in Thorley; once you have built on all the green spaces how can there be a community, people will just exist; unhappily. 'The council believes that parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest with their own sense of identity and that electors should be able to identify with the parish in which they live. The wishes of local inhabitants and any submissions providing evidence of community identity or local linkages are therefore important considerations in this review'. The Boundaries must remain the same. Bishops Stortford is crumbling under the population pressure, we need to keep communities not expand them just because councils are under pressure to build more homes, where is everyone going to go?	
W24	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	This consultation is connected too closely to removing opposition by Thorley residents and the Parish Council for development on the Green Belt.	No comment at this time on other Ward Boundaries changes

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W25	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	We have lived in the parish of Thorley for the past 50 years, our children were christened in Thorley church, and the area is of outstanding beauty, just to walk-up though the open fields and ancient hedgerows and to take-in this wonderful view over the Stort valley. To take this away, from not only local people but those whom come to visit the parish, would be absolute madness to give this historical area over to the greedy developers at the whim of the jobsworth councillors of EHDC. The area is becoming one large town which is NOT the reason people moved here for.	
W26	Local resident	BS South	No	Bishop's Stortford	Bishops Stortford is becoming an unrecognisable very large town. Too busy and congested to drive and very expensive to park.	
W27	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W28	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	The area in South ward that is adjacent to the Thorley Parish has been known as Thorley Park since the development was built some 30 years ago. Most of the households have affiliations to one or other of the following: the church of St James the Great, Thorley and local youth organisations; 1st Thorley Scout group, Guides and Thorley U3A. They have an identity with the Parish of Thorley, even the community shopping precinct is known as Thorley. Should the changes go through the Parish of Thorley will disappear and become an anonymous part of Bishop's Stortford. The village community that existing will be lost. When we arrived here 35 years ago, it was the attraction of a village community that convinced us this was the place for our family to be safe and grow. The redrawing of the parish boundary is not necessary, as the	

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					Thorley Parish functions efficiently and is well managed. It will impact on the public footpaths such as the Hertfordshire Way. It will effectively remove a tier of local government, which is safeguarding the Green Belt from further changes and the possible over development of 750 plus houses, which has already been turned down by a previous Secretary of State judgement. The proposed changes are a thinly veiled attempt by the B.S.T.C to take control of this sensitive area of development, hiding behind the fantasy of more effective and convenient local government. The way forward would be to allow the Thorley PC to gain the area entirely up to the south side of Whittington Way and Obrey Way, the entirety Thorley Lane east/ Church Lane, including the Thorley cricket field which on the circulated diagram 100018528 shows to be within the South Ward boundary, which is adding to the confusion of this matter and would have little or no impact on properties currently within South ward. Please allow the Thorley Parish Council to be able to determine the future of this area, not be side lined by some devious boundary changes, that should they be granted eliminate the need of a parish council.	
W29	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	We do not want any more development in and around the bishops Stortford area, in particular in Thorley. The town is already overpopulated with the road network already gridlocked even before the current new developments are built.	

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W30	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Thorley is a distinct village. I believe that altering the boundaries is the backdoor green light for the council to build on the land south of Whittington Way. I enjoy the village feel of this area and the country walks and wildlife in this part of town. I do not feel the boundaries need 'tidying' as a way of developing the land.	Leave the ward boundaries as they are, it seems there are not advantages listed - provide evidence of why this is beneficial as I cannot see any as a local resident.
W31	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	The population profile of Thorley is vastly different to Bishop's Stortford. It is more community minded having a true village mentality. I can see no reason for the boundary change other than to give greater power to a Town Council that is already too powerful and defies the local desires. They always appear to know better. Giving them control over this area will further remove them from the people who live in this area, allowing them to further bully the people they are supposed to be working for. Sitting in the centre of the town, do they not realise that people choose to live at the edge of the town to enjoy the open space not far away. This additional power will just allow the Town Council to 'Rubber Stamp' more and more development that is currently outside their control. Big, in this case, is not beautiful, it is ugly!	
W32	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	I fear that planning decisions would be taken by BSTC railroading local residence of Thorley. Why change them if not to gain more planning powers	

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W33	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	The area marked 'A' is rural/arable. It is not at all like the town centre. I, and residents in the area who I have spoken to, feel that the Thorley Parish Council better understands and represents the area than the people/council of the built-up town. The growth of the Bishops Stortford South ward, with additional properties from the estates, exaggerates the differences between the relatively new built-up area and the old rural Area marked 'a' on the map.	
W34	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I think that the current boundary should be retained as Thorley is an ancient parish which has been around for hundreds of years. The people of the parish have a sense of identity with their parish and will want to remain part of it rather than being incorporated into the much bigger neighbouring parish of Bishops Stortford. Thorley is a beautiful rural village with its own church and a distinct identity. The residents have a sense of community which could be lost if the boundary change goes ahead. I think that the ancient parish should be preserved.	
W35	Local resident	Thorley Rural	No	Thorley	I see no benefit to the local people; this is just a land grab by a bigger neighbour seeking to influence. Thorley Parish already reflects the identity of its community and is already cohesive. We are a small Parish with a great history and the community here relish that sense of tradition and heritage. Local government here is fine as it is now, we are represented by people who live here and understand the needs of the people. That would not be the case with a more remote body that has a large constituent demand. My view is that if it is not broken then do not attempt to fix it and I am suspicious of the motivation for this proposal.	None

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W36	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W37	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I believe the ward change is a deceptive device to allow the BISH5 (B/S South) development to proceed unhindered. Thorley is a class 3 village and this land DOES fall within the village boundary and as such is a "no development " area. The boundary change is a landgrab action and should be highlighted as such.	
W38	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I believe the ward change is a deceptive device to allow the BISH5 (B/S South) development to proceed unhindered. Thorley is a class 3 village and this land DOES fall within the village boundary and as such is a "no development " area. The boundary change is a landgrab action and should be highlighted as such.	
W39	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	I do not want the boundaries to be changed. I see no reason for doing this.	
W40	Local resident	BS All Saints	No	Thorley	Thorley was and still is a village and as such should keep its own identity and be able to protect this area from over development in the future.	
W41	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Worried about building on green belt land. Upset about new houses planned for Whittington way area.	
W42	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	This is mainly to enable more unwanted development.	
W43	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Another ploy to destroy green belt	

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W44	Local resident	BS Silverleys	Yes	Thorley	If the area inside the bypass is developed it should be part of Bishops Stortford, but not otherwise. All of St Michael's Mead should clearly be in BS. To maintain a viable Thorley Parish the properties on Thorley Street could remain in Thorley parish. A compromise maybe?	BS Central needs complete redrawing as it doesn't include much of the town centre. There might need to be wide ranging changes once BS North is developed, as this could be a good opportunity to start afresh.
W45	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Clearly meant to enable green belt to be destroyed even more easily	
W46	Local resident	BS Central	No	Thorley		
W47	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Chance of development next to Whittington way being built. This would be very bad for the area and local residents	
W48	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	I think that it is really important to local residents that Thorley remains as a village and a parish.	
W49	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	EHDC way of obtaining planning for Bishops Stortford South development and no other interest.	
W50	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	Because this gives the Town Council the unhindered control of BISH5 development being sought. This is a way of pushing aside any resistance by the Thorley Council to the development. The voices of the Thorley residents will be lost. Pig Lane is a	

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					congested rat run of a road that Stortford South will only multiply 4 times as proved by the evidence in the planning consultations. As above this is just a way of silencing any small councils to push through developments in those areas without challenge.	
W51	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I do not wish to lose a local Parish Council. Local democracy is important and the Parish Council are able to take into account the view if residents in the Thorley area rather than those of Bishops Stortford Town Council.	
W52	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	As BS Town Council are already doing a wonderful job of ruining the rest of the town it is blatantly obvious to anyone that the only reason for this boundary change is so they can destroy the Thorley Parish as well, with new developments. The roads and infrastructure on that side of Thorley/Stortford are already pushed to the limit during the busy times of the day and further burdening them with extra demand just so the council can sell off the land and reap extra council tax is no reason for this proposed change. The whole proposal is obviously driven by the lure of developers' promises and funds. But once they have squeezed every last ounce out of this town and ruined it they will move on to the next town. They, and the council employees/planners, may not have to care about the residents of Thorley and Bishop's Stortford but the elected members of the council are meant to. This is why WE elect them in the first place.	

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W53	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Thorley village and the parish have been in existence since doomesday - to change the boundaries would result in the historic village, which has a strong community, losing its identity. The council are saying that the changes are to promote better community cohesion, how can the obliteration of a villages' identity do this? I find the timing of this proposed change somewhat questionable when taking into account that Thorley as a Grade 3 village, which cannot be developed, is potentially an obstruction to the proposed development of Bishop's Stortford South. If this boundary change was to be endorsed then the proposed development would almost certainly get the go ahead. The infrastructure of Bishop's Stortford is already strained, and the roads are permanently gridlocked that is without taking into account the development that is already underway. It would mean that Thorley Parish would be left with only 22 houses. That is not a village!	
W54	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	It's an encroachment into Thorley parish, divides the parish community, demolishes parish governance and destroys village name and identity. Council justification is trivial and stems from unprincipled motivation and self interest	
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No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W56	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I feel that Thorley should remain a "village" with a Parish Council that has represented it faithfully for many years. These boundary changes will swallow-up this ancient parish and remove the democratic right of the residents to have a voice on their local parish matters as well as matters that concern the wider community.	
W57	Local resident	BS South	No	Don't know	Timing looks very suspicious in relation to the proposed Whittington Way development and these changes just smooth that process. With these proposed boundary changes you would in effect be removing Thorley Parish Council which may still be able to provide a useful community service to Thorley residents.	See my previous comments
W58	Local resident	BS Silverleys	No	Thorley	I live on Bishops Park. Unless there is a significant increase in local amenities such as doctors, schools, shops on the outskirts of the town the existing infrastructure cannot cope with the impact of this development. It's already carnage along the Hadham Road with building works and that's before the impact of the additional new residents and their cars on the existing roads. It's going to be completely gridlocked.	
W59	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Thorley is classed as a 3 Greenbelt Village and I believe that most people that live in this area want it to stay as a village, we do not class our homes as being in Bishops Stortford and if we lose our village it will be a travesty for all in the area as we will not have a say in what is built in the area. Greenbelt land should not be built on.	

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W60	Local resident	BS All Saints	No	Thorley	Thorley is a Class 3 Greenbelt village. No development is allowed in Class 3 villages. BISH 5 is part of this area and BSTC/EHDC want to allow Countryside Properties to build 750 houses and associated buildings. Scant/Limited dialogue with local residents and local councillors not available.	Would not comment until full details explained and specific criteria made available for these changes.
W61	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W62	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	The Parish Council do excellent work and fund raising for our local community and should be allowed to continue this work unhindered.	
W63	Member of Thorley Cricket Club		No	Thorley	The Village of Thorley is small enclave or rural tranquility and should not be swallowed up by surrounding metropolis	
W64	Thorley Cricket Club		No	Thorley	Small Villages should not be absorbed into adjacent conurbations	
W65	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Cricket club allegiances over 125 years.	
W66	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I'm sure there is a mix of views, but on balance I think Thorley. I suspect this is just a first step towards consuming all of Thorley Ward. Given the current high rate of house building in Bishops Stortford I think the town needs a slow down while it adapts rather than eating up more of the surrounding area.	

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W67	Member of Thorley Cricket Club		No	Thorley		
W68	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W69	Former resident & member of Thorley Cricket Club		No	Thorley	By taking away this area from Thorley you are impacting the recreation of the neighbourhood. We live in a time where recreation is vital to ensure fitness and vitality rather than pushing people into not going outdoors and interacting with others. We all need space away from home and to enjoy sport is vital in all forms of life.	
W70	Local resident	BS Central	No	Thorley	We are local residents who use local facilities such as Thorley cricket club whose facilities may be compromised if this goes ahead	
W71	Use cricket club and don't trust you		No	Don't know		
W72	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	This will destroy Thorley, which has a rich history & is beautiful. We have to protect it so that isn't over developed.	
W73	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Potential loss of more "green areas" and "recreation areas" to housing developments.	
W74	Local resident	BS South	No	Don't know		
W75	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		

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W76	Local resident	BS South	No	Don't know	Don't want that area to be developed. It is green belt land.	
W77	Local resident	BS South	No	Don't know	Green belt land should not be built on	
W78	Local resident, BS town councillor	BS Silverleys	Yes	Bishop's Stortford	This boundary would give the Town Council a more realistic boundary of the Town's by-pass. It also resolves the anomaly that BSTC South Ward does not cover this area, but EHDC South Ward does.	These are sensible modifications to deal with anomalies where blocks of flats have been built over ward boundaries, boundaries run up half a street etc. A tidying up exercise to make councillors more accountable to the residents they serve by making it clearer to residents who their representatives are. The Chief Executive of BSTC's report

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						outlined a number of anomalies that could usefully be tidied up.
W79	Cricket club member		No	Thorley		
W80	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W81	Local residents	BS South	No	Thorley	Our area is known as Thorley Park, and has been for very many years, and is signposted as such. If the boundary changes are made, Thorley Village will no longer be classed as a grade 3 village and housebuilding will be allowed. As well as losing our green belt status this will mean lots of houses being built on an area previously designated as not being allowed. This is appalling!! BSTC are just out to enlarge an already over populated area. Isn't Stortford North and Hazel end enough?	
W82	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W83	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I regularly walk my dog over this area in open fields where he can run free. More houses going here will make no local free spaces and the town is congested as is. London Road is gridlocked I don't want my children breathing anymore pollution than they are already are exposed to (which is currently too much).	
W84	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W85	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W86	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	Leave things as they are.	
W87	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I have lived in Thorley for the last fifty years. It will make the area too urban.	
W88	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W89	Local resident	Thorley Rural	No	Thorley	I want to see Thorley retain its village status and identity. It is important local people are represented by local people in all decisions to do with local planning and changes to the area, and the Thorley Parish Council do this extremely well and should remain in place.	
W90	Local resident	BS All Saints	No	Don't know	I used "don't know" above because there is not a blanket answer. Part of the population definitely "belongs" to Thorley Village, though the more recent residents may not feel the same. My concern is that ALL residents would wish to remain in Thorley because of the huge development proposed in the Green Belt. Thorley parish could not accept such development whereas Bishop's Stortford Town Council could, IF the Green Belt is released for building. (Also, of course, Thorley residents would have a far higher precept in the Town.) I used to live in the area being considered and have lived in the town for over 40 years so feel able to comment on what appears to be an underhand proposal.	Most seem quite logical and I do not feel affected by them.
W91	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W92	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	There is no reason apparent for the requested proposals other than to control any new development in BS South/Thorley area. The reasons are that the proposals do not fulfil any of the requirements of EHDCs review terms of reference to advantage to residents, improvement of services, reflective of local identity, interests of the community nor any improvement of provisions for effective or convenient local government. The proposals for electoral ward changes in most locations involve such small numbers as to be negligible except for BS South ward where it is apparent that the real reason for the change as stated [in EHDC's CGR of BSTC's terms of reference 1.6] is to control all new developments in Thorley Parish. And that para. 8.4 in terms of ref. states that the boundary change will not guarantee the electoral ward changes which were given as reasons for the boundary change. As a requested review, the proposals are illogical and do not fulfil or give evidence to support any of the requirements demanded in EHDCs terms for a review. A far more logical boundary change would be for Thorley Parish to absorb the fringe areas of B.Stortford adjacent to Whittington Way, Obrey Way and Thorley Street and make those roads the TP Council's boundary, this would involve a very few residences, minimal change to electoral wards and the proposal would fulfil all county requirements for CGR.	
W93	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	My lovely market town is being slowly destroyed, I have lived here for many years and although change is inevitable and sometimes for the better it is important to keep the character of our town. We already have thousands of dwellings coming	

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
					to our town so please leave the fringes untouched. Keep Stortford separate from Sawbridgeworth and keep Thorley separate from Stratford.	
W94	Local resident	BS Central	Yes	Bishop's Stortford	Sensible idea	Thorley should be a separate ward as should St Michael's Mead
W95	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley		
W96	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	The existing Thorley area is a distinct separate community. We would like to remain as such. The electoral areas as they currently stand correctly reflect the community structure. There is no viable reason (other than to open up land for development) for the proposed boundary changes. The infrastructure in the area is already over capacity and the restrictions that the current boundary structure provide are fair and reflect that.	
W97	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	In a nutshell. Greenbelt should remain as such - it was created for the very purpose of preventing excessive development. There is already a lot of new resi development happening / happened recently. The town needs a hospital / more medical facilities including GP surgeries + staff to run them - the council has a duty of care to the existing town. Bishops Stortford is supposed to be a market town not a mini Canary Wharf. All the redevelopment is destroying the character. Where does it end ? When the town starts joining up and absorbing smaller villages etc. in its environs? What about general maintenance of the	

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
					existing town let alone increasing the massing on the volume proposed - leaves/organic detritus isn't cleared up - left to rot on pavements and block drains - some of which, even on the main thoroughfare are totally silted over causing a build up of surface water whenever it rains - the town is often gridlocked now without all the additional traffic from the proposed new housing. The town can't support all the extra people. If the infrastructure is to be improved that needs to happen first.	
W98	Local resident	BS South	No	Thorley	I have lived in this area for 30+ years and do not see any legitimate reason why the boundary needs to change. It is a semi rural space providing much needed greenery and a peaceful area for all residents to use. Historically it has been the site of archaeological interest, the 12th century church and the historic woodland should not be threatened in any way by being subjected to a change which could prove detrimental.	
W99	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	1. I note that in the Terms of Reference for the Community Governance Review, the only "Reason for the Review" advanced by the Town Council is that for "areas of further potential development consented or envisaged within the Draft District Plan ... the Town Council considers the development area will be seen as part of Bishops Stortford". This is clearly a reference to the 53ha's of land at Bishops Stortford South recommended for removal from the Green Belt and development for at least 750 homes and other facilities under Policy BISH5. This policy is still under consideration by the Inspector and has been the subject of significant objections, particularly by Thorley Parish residents, both at the Examination in Public and during the current Modifications consultation	None

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
					process. Even if allocated in the Draft District Plan, the development will still require positive outline and detailed planning decisions and is only programmed in the Plan for 200 homes by 2023 and the remainder by 2033. It is therefore presumptive and premature to amend the Thorley Parish boundary solely for this reason. 2. If DFR Policy BISH5 is not successful will have been made for no appropriate reason. If successful – and subsequent planning applications approved – no evidence has been advanced that the “area will be seen as part of Bishops Stortford” As objections to BISH5 have made clear, the development is seen as being within and part of Thorley village (a Group 3 Village in the Draft District Plan) and impacting most severely on Thorley residents. I note that the effect of bringing the Bishops Stortford South site within the Bishops Stortford Town Council boundary will allow EHDC to remove Thorley Parish and other Thorley stakeholders from the masterplanning process required by the Draft District Plan. 3. The apparent focus of the boundary change on bringing Bishops Stortford South into the Town Council area may also be used to call into question Thorley’s Group 3 Village status in the Draft District Plan (where no major development is allowed). As the promoters of BISH5, EHDC has a significant interest in removing masterplanning and Group 3 Village status obstacles to development. Since, as the Terms of Reference state, EHDC will make the final recommendation and implement the boundary change there is a clear conflict of interest in its role as “Principal Council” for this Community Governance Review.	

No.	Respondent	Ward (if local resident)	Agree that Area 'A' should become part of BSTC area?	Do people who live/work in Area 'A' identify more with BS or Thorley?	Reasons	Any comments on changes to ward boundaries within BSTC?
W100	Local resident & Thorley Parish Councillor	BS Central	No	Thorley	See letter M22 in table 2	
W101	Thorley Parish Council		No	Thorley	See document M23 in table 2	
W102	Local resident	Thorley Urban	No	Thorley	See document M23 in table 2	

TABLE 2 - COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BISHOP'S STORTFORD TOWN COUNCIL – INITIAL CONSULTATION RESPONSES RECEIVED VIA E-MAIL OR LETTER

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M1	E-mail	Local residents	Thorley Urban	If Thorley Parish is to retain its heritage and identity then, at the very least, the area south of Whittington Way (Thorley Street) should retain its current status. Clearly the politics of the controversial Bishop's Stortford South development are paramount in the authorities thinking. This will be categorically denied, of course, but one look at the boundaries map (Area A) says everything. Another 750+ proposed new households etc. in the area. A nice little earner. Hopefully this will not occur but the signs are ominous and the historic Thorley Parish will eventually be confined to the history books. This should not be allowed to happen - Thorley, the ancient Thursdays Green, is part of our heritage and should be preserved in every way possible.
M2	Letter	Local resident	Thorley Urban	To whom it may concern. I do <u>not</u> agree with any boundary changes for the south of B. S. as suggested by the Council. Yours sincerely. I was unable to either complete a questionnaire or send e-mail.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M3	E-mail	Not stated		Quick note to say that I have read the leaflet, and gone online to discover more. The online presentation is very convoluted and esoteric and difficult to navigate. A link to the PRECISE matter under discussion here would be helpful. As far as the leaflet goes - it is not clear what the NET IMPACT on the residents of either parish will be. Presumably for residents of BS, council tax will go down, and for those of Thorley, it will rise. This is not an easy leaflet to either understand or comment on. The missing information is a table showing the likely consequences of the change. It is unhelpful to have a leaflet highlighting the importance of our views (what is the question you are asking?) - maybe I am missing something obvious, but what exactly would the impact be? I am a resident of Bishops Stortford - am I right in assuming that council tax will go down, and that Thorley will be more substantially represented relative to the electorate. And WHY is this important? What changes are afoot that would impact the wards and that could be affected by this change?
M4	E-mail	Local resident	Thorley Urban	Dear Sirs, It is vital that the Thorley parish boundary remains where it is. With plans by East Herts District Council for a large development in the South Ward adjacent to Whittington Way the views of the local residents most affected are more than ever best represented by Thorley parish at its present size. If boundaries are moved the number of electors remaining in Thorley parish will be few with the possibility that the parish will become too small to be effective. The view of many residents in the parish is that Bishops Stortford Town Council has little interest in the impact that housing development is and will have on the town and do not represent the views of the local community.
M5	Letter	Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation		See copy of letter appended to this Essential Reference Paper
M6	Letter	Local resident	Thorley Urban	Dear Sir, I oppose any form of boundary change to Thorley Parish to enlarge Bishop's Stortford South Ward. I have lived in Thorley Parish for over 30 years & this proposed change would leave Thorley Parish as some local fields. I consider that move is to allow the removal of green belt ground south of Whittington Way. To really have 'our' say surely a vote should be held to indicate all the views of Thorley. Is there a possibility of a separation from East Herts along the same lines?

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M7	E-mail	Hertford & Stortford Conservative Association		Further to your recent email concerning the above, I am pleased to advise you that Hertford and Stortford Conservative Association endorse your proposal for this review.
M8	E-mail	Local residents	Not stated	Dear 'Keep Thorley Village' campaigners, Sadly we were unable to attend the meeting on Friday evening but do still feel very strongly about your campaign to save our community. We live just off of Whittington Way having moved here from London very recently. We were inspired to purchase here due to the beauty & feel of the area. The outlook from our property is so beautiful & a long way from the built up area that we moved away from. We lived in an area over many years & through three generations in the same house before that was very beautiful & cared for. Over time we have watched overdevelopment take place & completely ruin the area to the point where there is no community spirit & it being a horrible place to live. Kids hung around the roads & burglaries, vandalism, antisocial behaviour & drugs became a huge problem. People lost interest in their surroundings & flytipping was common. There was a village community there once & a pride in their homes, gardens, surroundings & community spirit. This no longer exists. We have found the community & surroundings here to be so welcoming &, quite honestly, idyllic. The greenbelt land within Thorley is so lovely and connects to the Southern Country Park that is used & enjoyed by so many in the local community & beyond. There are miles of footpaths & country walks all over, used by walkers, dog walkers, etc that bring you so close to nature & an escape from our busy lives. The health benefits speak for themselves both physically, mentally & emotionally. The trees and greenery filter the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere which again are a major consideration to public health. Children love the parks and open areas to play, explore and investigate. Children need more encouragement to play a lot more outdoors and less time on gadgets, again there are many health and development benefits from this also. The wildlife and plants, hedgerow, trees, flowers and alike are also very important to save. Natural habitats are abundant in these areas for many species of the above. Bees are in decline in the UK as well as many insects, birds & mammals. Their habitats are being destroyed at a great rate of knots making it harder for them to survive & flourish. This also applies to the many plant species. Man & nature need to be encouraged to live alongside each other & we need to keep our beautiful villages & communities alive all the more for these reasons.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
				There has been a lot of development in the local area already and expansion has been huge so far. To further build, especially in Thorley Village, would totally ruin the beauty of this idyllic village community in a devastating way. It would definitely not be progress that would benefit this area positively in any way whatsoever. Too many areas are becoming overdeveloped in this way creating divide amongst people and not promoting a happy, beautiful community spirit that people value and strive to keep that way. It crushes the spirit in community creating another concrete jungle and a huge burden on the infrastructure around us. The public services such as GPS, schools, etc would mean further development, again even further impacting on this beautiful area. The village would change so much and lose its charm and identity. The whole reason & point of us moving here to escape an area that once was so beautiful & has declined so dramatically would have been wasted. It would be criminal to expand Stortford & WE MUST KEEP THORLEY VILLAGE.
M9	E-mail	Local resident	Thorley Urban	Dear Sirs, As a long-time resident of Bishops Stortford there has been lots of change – I am not one to instantly moan, the town has changed and is now a thriving community, but as you know this brings lots of challenges too. Whilst I am sure schooling and healthcare are being considered as part of the expansion, I am very worried about traffic. At present the queues on the bypass and into town and around Sawbridgeworth are already unmanageable. Could I please have any information or plans, in relation to the ongoing consultation process, as to how you are planning to alleviate the increased traffic pressure on a system which is already at breaking point? Many thanks.
M10	Letter	Local resident	BS South	Dear Sir, Re: Proposed development south of Whittington Way. Obviously this is a protest against the EHDC plan. There are a number of reasons for this to be a non-starter. Clearly we, the U.K., need more houses & the Government have decided on the number. However, there are already far too many currently being built in & around Bishop's Stortford without proper thought being given to how the Town will cope & how the current infrastructure & services will manage. BS as a market town & Thorley as a village & a parish are about to be seriously damaged beyond repair. I urge you to act responsibly, sensitively & thoughtfully. Yours faithfully.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M11	E-mail	Local residents	Not stated	We wish to register our objection to the proposed development on the Southern edge of the town. Having lived in Twyford Park for nearly 50 years we have seen successive developments gradually taking over all the former farm land on the southern side of town, and though we appreciate the need for further housing, this new proposal is a step too far for the existing population of Bishops Stortford. We already find it nearly impossible to drive out of Bishops Ave. at certain times - the traffic is queuing to get out of Whittington Way due to the tail back on the A1184 going into Bishops Stortford. The doctors are full to breaking point, the schools are already full, the A. and E. dept. at Harlow hospital is totally inadequate and the existing car parks are often full by 11a.m. A great deal more thought needs to be put into any further expansion of the town and the need for the infrastructure to sustain it. The needs of the present population should take priority. We also feel that Thorley should retain its status as a village and separate Parish.
M12	Letter	Local resident, OTTRA	BS South	Dear Sir/Madam, I am writing to you to say <u>NO</u> to the Town Council's request to EHDC for its boundary to be moved to run alongside the bypass. <u>Why?</u> Because it is encroachment into Thorley Parish and transfers parish jurisdiction to town council. <u>Because</u> it divides parish community, demolishes parish governance, and destroys village name and identity. <u>Because</u> it gives to the town council the unhindered control of BISH5 development being sought. <u>Because</u> the council's justification for it is trivial and stems from unprincipled motivation and self-interest. <u>Because</u> it excludes rural parishioners. How has this situation come about? - Thorley is a Class 3 Greenbelt Village - No development is allowed in Class 3 villages - EHDC ignored this policy and went ahead to propose in the draft district plan removal of Greenbelt from Thorley and selection of BISH5 site for development - Policy breach raised with examiner at plan hearing - Consequence – problem for examiner and set back for town council?? Hence try to get rid of Parish Council?? Concluding this letter with what has become our mantra it seems. STOP EAST HERTS COUNCIL BUILDING ON THE GREEN BELT! PREVENT PRIME FARM LAND BEING USED FOR HOUSING! STOP URBAN SPRAWL AROUND BISHOP'S STORTFORD! Thank you for reading this letter. Yours sincerely.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M13	E-mail	Hertfordshire County Council		Hertfordshire County Council considers that in the main the proposals outlined in the Community Governance Review for Bishop's Stortford address anomalies some of which have arisen from residential development. The Council wishes East Herts District Council to note that the proposals for minor changes to parish wards within Bishop's Stortford town would, if agreed, lead to some loss of coterminosity with district and county division boundaries and would require referral to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England and Wales. See copy of e-mail appended to this Essential Reference Paper.
M14	E-mail	Bishop's Stortford Town Council		
M15	E-mail	Hockerill Residents' Association		As Chair of Hockerill Residents Association I wish to support the realignment of the Bishop's Stortford boundary so that it encompasses Area A on your map i.e. makes the Town and District South wards both align with the by-pass. It is evident to anyone that the residents within that area all enjoy the facilities of Bishop's Stortford and as such those provided by BS Town Council and Rhodes. Also, St Michael's Mead is one community with its own Hall and this adjustment would promote community cohesion as most of residents would doubtless regard themselves as living in Bishop's Stortford and reflect their actual identity and interests. Making the District and Town boundaries the same would also promote effective and convenient local government and ensure that BSTC as a consultative body would be able to comment on Planning issues that impact on its schools and other infrastructure and be better for community representation and engagement such as at the Annual Town meeting and the various BSTC Committees where residents have the right to attend and speak. Given the resources of BSTC and professional staff they would be better placed to serve the existing and any new residents. Similar views as above would support the tidying up of internal BS Ward boundaries as proposed as polling stations could be clearer for people living in the same roads where currently there is division of either part or one side of a street or indeed a few houses and people have assumed that they are in one community where in fact current ward boundaries put them in another. HRA support the adjustments proposed. It is currently odd that several Wards have anomalies from back garden development in other Wards or new developments such as at Tanners Wharf were once there were no residents as it was an industrial site. Now it has something like 24 councillors for a few blocks with one residents association.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M16	E-mail	Town Mayor, Bishop's Stortford Town Council		As Town Mayor of Bishop's Stortford I write to support the review of Town and ward boundaries as proposed. Examining the Minutes of the Thorley Parish Council in comparison to those of BS Town Council readily illustrates that BSTC provides effective and convenient local government with greater frequency and better opportunities for residents to be represented and speak and engage with their councillors at a number of committees, task & finish or working groups and full Council. The South Ward boundary change would further clarify representation by aligning District and Ward boundaries and move the BS parish to a definitive boundary of the by-pass. It is quite clear that residents of St Michael's mead whilst enjoying the facilities that BSTC provide to its residents also are one community with their own community hall, – supported by BSTC administration and should not be artificially divided because their house stands in a different part of what was a fields form that of their neighbours. The Annual Town meeting of BSTC has also been attended by residents from Pig Lane and other parts of what is current TPC on the assumption by them that they are already BS residents. Transferring these residents from Thorley Parish to BS would not impact on the viability of Thorley as a separate rural community as it would simply return TPC to electoral numbers that it enjoyed prior to the development of St Michael's Mead. Conversely one might say the BS currently has too many councillors in multi-cllr Wards for the amount of work that is required, (compare that a County Cllrs alone covers two Wards as a single Division but taking just as one example, BS Ward of All Saints, that has three District and four Town cllrs). There may be a case for fewer BS cllrs as well as for increase in the size of the parish to encompass the proposed area to promote more effective and convenient local government. The changes to the five internal BS Wards also make sense in terms of definable communities of interest. To cite a few examples: a few houses in Lea Grove, only accessible from All Saints Ward, are in Meads simply because they were developed at the end of v long back gardens of homes of Stansted Rd, i.e. Meads Ward. By contrast a few houses in Collins Cross are severed from their neighbours in Meads and placed in All Saints. Stylemans Lane is in South ward but is on the far edge of All Saints – only linked to South Ward by the Stort Navigation; road access is via All Saints. Then there are two back land development houses from Stansted Rd placed in Meads but which are on Parsonage Lane and regarded as part of All Saints by the community. The paper to K Williams dated 20 December from James Parker

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
				makes clear and appropriate cases for similar anomalies to be rectified in other Wards. To take just a few examples, a few homes right at the top of Westfield Rd, (itself in Meads), fall into Silverleys; one side of Bells Hill is Meads, the other, Silverleys, which confuses both residents and cllrs; the rear of Wentworth Drive is in Central but the bulk of homes are in Silverleys and so on. I hope all of the proposed changes put forward by BSTC can be accepted as there is a clear logic consistent with good local government and the identities and interests of the communities affected. See copy of document appended to this Essential Reference Paper.
M17	E-mail	Local resident	BS South	
M18	E-mail	The Hundred Parishes Society		Dear Sir, I write on behalf of the trustees of The Hundred Parishes Society. The Society is a registered charity whose aims are to increase awareness, enjoyment and conservation of an area of northwest Essex, northeast Hertfordshire and south Cambridgeshire that is characterised by its rich and diverse heritage. The Society's membership includes twenty parish councils, one of which is Thorley. I should make it clear that the Hundred Parishes and its boundary have no statutory basis. When we defined the boundary several years ago we chose to exclude Bishop's Stortford and Stansted Airport as their characteristics differed from the generally rural nature of the Hundred Parishes. The Hundred Parishes perimeter was defined entirely along parish boundaries with the exception of the exclusion of Stansted Airport. Thorley parish falls within the Hundred Parishes. The Society objects to the proposed realignment of the boundary between Bishop's Stortford and Thorley on the following grounds: 1 The area under discussion lies within the Green Belt. Annexation from an essentially rural parish to an urban town appears to increase the threat that this Green Belt land will lose its protection and cease to serve the purpose for which it was established, primarily to prevent urban sprawl. 2 Thorley parish is part of an extensive area that for some years has been informally known as The Hundred Parishes. This is an area that combines natural beauty with an exceptional depth of rural and architectural heritage. The scope of this special area should not be eroded. Yours faithfully, Ken McDonald, Secretary to The Hundred Parishes Society

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M19	E-mail	Local resident	BS All Saints	Dear sir, I write to object to the above. I believe that such measures are premature and unreasonably anticipate that green belt land will be freed for housing when twice before the same land has been the subject of applications for related/similar development and both times struck down by inspectors and government. I joined focus groups during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan for this area of Bishop's Stortford and I believe EHC is ignoring the spirit and word of it. If this proposal had been discussed in the groups at the same time as the possibility of BS South happening then this would have received exactly the same short shrift. I believe EHC is striking a deal with the BS Town Council in this proposal in order to pursue the aim of stuffing more housing in Stortford which has been their policy in recent times. This follows as a result of the same councillors appearing at various levels of local administration, parish/town, district and county, which works against ward representation and is not good for local scrutiny and democracy. Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation represents a large number of townspeople and has done so for many years, gathering opinions and focusing efforts to achieve reasonable and sustainable town growth by consensus not by edict. The councillors would do well to heed the views published by the federation. The federation president, John Rhodes, has written a letter dated 8th March in connection with this consultation and I wish it to be recorded that I concur with every word. Yours faithfully. See copy of letter appended to this Essential Reference Paper.
M20	E-mail	Old Thorley & Twyford Residents' Association		
M21	Letter	Local resident	BS South	Dear Sir/Madam, I would like to voice my objection to the development of Green Belt land adjacent to Whittington Way, Bishop's Stortford. This is a designated Green Belt land how can the boundaries then be moved to allow the building of houses schools & factories? Whittington Way is already a very busy road what will the traffic be like when the people from 750 homes exit the estate? If I wanted to build a house on that land permission would not be granted as the objection would be 'it is Green Belt land'. Also this is a busy flight path to Stansted Airport, not the best place to build new houses I would have thought. Sadly the 'village' of Thorley will be lost.

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M22	Letter	Local resident & Thorley Parish Councillor	BS Central	I know this development will probably go ahead as the people with the 'big money' – Countryside – nearly always win against the 'little' people who are only trying to make our lives better by keeping out lovely green fields. Yours faithfully. Dear Mr Williams, I lived in Thorley from 1984 to 2013 and I am currently a Thorley Parish Councillor. I am writing to say that I object to the proposed Thorley boundary change as I do not believe that Bishop's Stortford Town Council have demonstrated that the change is necessary. The boundary review has been described by Bishop's Stortford Town Councillors as "ironing out the wrinkles" and "tidying things up". Their proposal focuses on boundaries but overlooks the existing community. It is not clear what Bishop's Stortford could add. The proposal would result in the abolition of Thorley Parish Council and reduce the number of houses to 23, making it non viable community. Currently it has its own Parish Council, Church, Scout Group, and U3A branch. And a strong sense of identity. The community has come together to stay in existence. There was a public meeting attended by about 40 people and a letter writing campaign and petition were organized. People within the Parish and in the wider area have expressed their support for Thorley to stay in being as a Parish and Village. I note that the projected elector figures for Thorley Parish in five years time will be 1079. The increase takes account of proposed new building in the Parish. In my view the new community (if it happens) would be better served by its own Parish Council than by being part of the town. The new houses would be located in the Parish with a clear boundary of Whittington Way on one side and Thorley Street on the other. I agree with the proposal that the fringe areas of Bishop's Stortford adjacent to Obrey Way, Whittington Way and Thorley Street should be incorporated into Thorley Parish. It would be better for everyone, in my view if the established community stayed in being and any newcomers joined that community. The alternative offered by the Town Council is to be an add on to the existing town with the uninspiring name of Bishop's Stortford South. What Thorley Parish has to offer is known but the Town Council have not specified what they can offer the people of Thorley. Yours sincerely. See copy of document appended to this Essential Reference Paper.
M23	Appendix to consult'n form	Thorley Parish Council		

No.	Channel	Respondent	If local resident, ward	Content of response
M24	Hard copy, hand delivered	Petition		125 sheets headed "Save Your Community – Survey on behalf of Thorley Parish Council. Please print name and address below and sign if you want no change to the current boundary between Thorley village and Bishop's Stortford:-" Signed by a total of 960 persons. The large majority of addresses given are in Bishop's Stortford (all wards represented) or Thorley. A small minority of addresses are from elsewhere in East Herts or outside the district.
M25	Hard copy, hand delivered	Proforma letters of objection		394 individually signed proforma letters stating "I object to the proposed Thorley boundary change – the proposed changes do not demonstrate any of the terms of reference." See example proforma letter appended to this Essential Reference Paper. The large majority of addresses given are in Bishop's Stortford – most in South ward - or Thorley. A very small minority of addresses are from elsewhere in East Herts or outside the district.

Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation

Registered Charity Number R264557

www.stortfordcf.org.uk



John Williams Esq
Electoral Services Officer
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John Williams

THORLEY PARISH COUNCIL
BOUNDARY ALTERATIONS

8 March 2018

I am writing on behalf of the Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation to comment on the proposal to transfer a part of what is currently Thorley Parish Council to Bishop's Stortford Town Council.

Thorley, although adjacent to Bishop's Stortford, is a largely rural village, unfortunately bisected by the bypass since the development of St Michael's Mead. A major development has been proposed in the Draft District Plan on land south of Whittington Way which is currently within the Green Belt. The site is also largely within the Parish of Thorley.

The Bishop's Stortford Civic Federation has objected to the removal of this site from the Green Belt for purposes of development on various grounds. These include the fact that no very special or exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to justify overturning the decisions of two previous Planning Inspectors and the Secretary of State to retain Green Belt protection.

However, there is an additional objection, namely that the Draft Plan designates Thorley as a Group 3 village. Within such villages the plan proposes that only limited infill development as identified in neighbourhood plans will be permitted. The Neighbourhood Plan covering this site, as well as the rest of southern Bishop's Stortford, makes it clear that the local population is strongly opposed to any development on this site, and by no stretch of the imagination could the development proposed be regarded as limited infill or sanctioned by the Neighbourhood Plan.

There is therefore an inherent contradiction in the Draft Plan between the proposed development of 750 homes, two schools and a neighbourhood centre, and the policy on Group 3 villages which is applicable to most of the site. The consultation currently taking place on proposed main modifications to the Draft Plan includes nothing which would resolve this inherent contradiction, and it remains to be seen what conclusions the Inspector will reach on the matter.

It therefore seems to the Civic Federation that the underlying reason for the proposed boundary changes is not administrative tidiness but to provide a retrospective legitimisation of an inherent flaw in the Draft Plan as it stands. Given that we object to the development of the Whittington Way site we can see no justification for the boundary change which appears to seek to anticipate the Inspector's decisions on the Draft Plan.

I should also add that if, against our wishes, and following consideration by the Inspector, EHDC adopts the Plan with this major development included in it, we would also question the rationale for the boundary change. The development will have a devastating impact on the village of Thorley. It would therefore seem to us contrary to natural justice that, with the development having trashed the village, a smash and grab raid should be launched, so as to deprive Thorley Parish of any compensating financial benefit that would arise from it.

12 MAR 2018

Williams John

From: James Parker <james.parker@bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk>
Sent: 05 April 2018 10:59
To: Williams John
Cc: 'James Parker'
Subject: Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council
Attachments: Bishop's Stortford Ward Boundary Maps.doc

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Dear John

Further to our recent discussions it occurs to me that, for the avoidance of doubt, I should formally set out the Bishop's Stortford Town Council response to the consultation.

For the avoidance of doubt:

1. Bishop's Stortford Town Council considers that a review of the boundaries as set out in the consultation is essential having regard to existing and future planned developments which are contiguous with the built up area of Bishop's Stortford
2. Bishop's Stortford Town Council considers that the boundary of the parish of Bishop's Stortford should be amended so that the whole of the current Bishop's Stortford South District ward (which currently is bisected by the parish boundary) is included within the Parish of Bishop's Stortford. It does not consider that any other amendments to the parish boundary should be made. The rationale for this is
 - a. The existing development at St Michaels Mead which is contiguous with the built up area of Bishop's Stortford is currently partly in the Parish of Bishop's Stortford and partly within the parish of Thorley, representing an unnatural administrative division within a single housing area
 - b. The proposed area within the Bishop's Stortford bypass known as 'Land South of Bishop's Stortford', which is allocated principally for housing in the emerging District plan, is contiguous with the built up area of Bishop's Stortford yet would lie partly in the parish of Bishop's Stortford and partly in the parish of Thorley creating an unnatural administrative division within a single contiguous housing area
 - c. The residents of the above developments do already/will (in the Case of the proposed new development) inevitably expect to take advantage of the services provided by Bishop's Stortford Town Council, with which these developments are contiguous
 - d. The proposed boundary and in particular the bypass forms a more natural and defensible boundary for the parish to the south/west of the Town, representing the boundary between an area with a distinctly rural character and the contiguous built up area of Bishop's Stortford
 - e. The current parish boundary to the south/west of the Town fails to meet the criteria for parish boundaries set out in the document "Guidance on community governance reviews" published by the Department for Communities and Local Government
 - f. The parish boundaries other than as specified above represent natural and defensible boundaries meeting the criteria set out by DCLG
3. Bishop's Stortford Town Council considers that minor adjustments should be made to parish ward boundaries within the Town to correct anomalies which have arisen due to the pattern of development. These are set out in detail below and on the maps in the attached document.

(FOR MAPS PLEASE SEE
 ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER B)

- a. Changes to roads which have residents in more than one ward and where it is requested that the boundary be re-drawn so that all properties are in the ward which currently has the largest number of electors:

Street/Road	Current Properties	Proposed Properties
Collins Cross	All Saints: 13 Meads: 37	Meads: 50
High Street	Central: 3 Meads: 1	Central: 4
Parsonage Lane	All Saints: 70 Meads: 2	All Saints: 72
Wentworth Drive	Central: 6 Silverleys: 72	Silverleys: 78
Westfield Road	Meads: 19 Silverleys: 4	Meads: 23
Dane O'coys Road, Whitehall Road	Meads: 3 Silverleys: 20	Silverleys: 23
Great Hadham Road (Honeysuckle House)	Silverleys: 2 South: 1	Silverleys: 3
Lea Grove	All Saints: 8 Meads: 5	All Saints: 13
South Road	Central: 40 South: 5	Central: 45
South Street	Central: 26 Meads: 11	Central: 37
Potter Street	Central: 1 Meads: 3	Meads: 4

- b. Changes to roads which have residents in more than one ward and where it is requested that the boundary be re-drawn so that the road(s) are in the ward from which access is gained or for some other reason as noted

Street	Current	Proposed	Note
Bells Hill, Regency Close, Windhill	Meads: 35 Silverleys: 73	Silverleys: 108	Bells Hill & Windhill are split; Regency Close is accessed from Bells Hill so logically should move with Bells Hill
Styleman's Farm (Hallingbury Road)	South: 2	All Saints: 2	Properties are separated from South ward by the River Stort. Access is from All Saints
Mulberry Court	South: 16	Central: 16	Access is from Central Ward only

Street	Current	Proposed	Note
The Thatchers, Stockmen Field, Drovers Way, Wainwright Street, Brewers Close, Thresher Close, The Carpenters, Tailors	Central: 224 South: 119	South: 343	Several roads in this natural group are split. Access is from South Ward
Tanners Wharf	All Saints: 76 Central: 19 South: 10	Central: 105	Access is from Central Ward
Priory Court	Silverleys: 35	Central: 35	This is a 'backland' development the Monastery estate from Access is from Central Ward
Thorley Hill	Central: 28 South: 54	Central: 26 South: 56	Change boundary so that split is at a natural point (a road)

4. Bishop's Stortford Town Council considers that equivalent minor amendments to the County division and District Ward boundaries should be made so that they coincide with the amended parish ward boundaries set out in point 2.
5. Bishop's Stortford Town Council does not at this stage wish to comment on the number of Councillors in each of the amended wards but may do so at the second consultation stage

Please take this as a formal response by Bishop's Stortford Town Council to the consultation.

Yours sincerely

James Parker
Chief Executive Officer

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www.bishopsstortfordtc.gov.uk
@stortfordtc

Bishop's Stortford Town Council
The Old Monastery
Windhill
Bishop's Stortford
CM23 2ND

Community Governance Review of Bishop's Stortford Town Council April 2018

In response to HAVE YOUR SAY leaflet that I, just by chance, picked up at the library in Bishop's Stortford. As effectively the leaflet, in my view, only concentrates on their proposal that consideration be made 'to consider whether the southern boundary of Bishop's Stortford parish should be re-drawn to follow the existing district ward boundary. If agreed, this would mean that the whole of the district council's Bishop's Stortford South ward, part of which is currently with Thorley parish, would instead be included in Bishop's Stortford Town Council's area.'

My view is that this was very misleading since this would mean that effectively Thorley Parish would become non-viable since it would leave the Parish with less than five councillors. With reference to the Terms of Reference 1.2 I feel that it has not been made clear that this could be the case.....by not outlining this in the leaflet or the formal request (email to Kevin Williams 20 December 2016 09:29) point 1 – whilst point 2 of the formal request is very specific, detailed – with maps and the approximate effect of the changes on the numbers of electors (based on the 2015 electoral register) set out in a table. However, it is not clear to me whether these figures relate only to point 2 or point 1 as well. To the general electorate one would have to know where exactly the line drawn of the whole of the district council's Bishop's Stortford South ward actually lies – or that Thorley Parish urban is in effect this area. There is no history as to why this up to this point has been excluded.

The HAVE YOUR SAY leaflet then shows a very small map – showing the area identified by the town council for consideration in the review – shaded and labelled A on the map.

The formal request by the Town Council attached very detailed maps (17 in total) but states that no map is attached in respect of the change in the Parish boundary (Thorley?) as this is already an established electoral line.

Even though the leaflet refers to **How to find out more** stating that **Full** information about the Community Governance Review including the terms of reference and detailed timetable together with **maps** of the area under review and the town council's suggestions for minor ward boundary changes are on the website here.....OR available at the East Hertfordshire District Council offices. The Terms of Reference 1.4 cites 'terms of reference will be published on the Council's website and in hard copy and will be made available at the District Council offices and at other venues within the area under review.'

I did quickly look at the web site and realised that the view of the map was impossible to understand on the web site so first of all I rang EHDC – I was on the phone to them for over half an hour – even the customer services denied that this was a matter for the District Council it was the Town Council. They actually transferred me to the Town Council. I did speak to James Parker – he rang me back – and he was able to talk to me and answer some of my initial queries. The following day I visited the BS library but they only had the Have your Say leaflets. They offered to ring electoral registry to see whether they could obtain any more information. I then visited EHDC offices in Bishop's Stortford but they had no reference to this – no Have your say leaflets, no Terms of Reference, definitely no maps. They did, however, put me through to John Williams as it appears that he was the only

person who could help (but only on a Monday or Tuesday). He offered to send me the terms of reference and anything else that he thought might be helpful, I believe this included a larger map but still not one that could identify clearly to me the actual area that was being put forward for consideration. Definitely not to the level of the individual changes proposed by the Town Council.

My recollection of my queries to James Parker were based on different references being made to Bishops Stortford Parish Council and then to BS Town Council in the leaflet. Were they the same organisation – if so why a change of their names. Quite small points but seemed to me to confuse my understanding of what I was being asked to have my say on. There were other points – eg what about the developments in the north of the town – I was assured that this was already in the domain of the Town Council and thus no reference needed. This is still not clear to me as to whether this review will be also focussing on the new developments and whether pointsorry hard to reference as numbering system does not follow any logical/normal system.....reference formal request email....not a,b or c,.....not 1. 2. Or 3. But then the next point 1. 'Changes to roads which have residents in more than one ward and where it is requested that the boundary re-drawn so that all properties are in the ward which currently has the largest number of electors. Again, I may be wrong but I am not sure that this has been outlined in as much detail for the boundary change proposed for Thorley. There is a point 2. As well. You might see why I might be having problems HAVING MY SAY. So there may be properties that actually will still not be part of the ward with the largest number of electors or neighbours in one road being in Thorley Parish and others in Bishops Stortford Parish. He made it clear that this was not to do with loss of green belt or any proposed developments. I feel that the leaflet is actually that any submissions providing evidence of community identity or local linkages are therefore important considerations in this review which may be that any loss of Thorley parish community would be seen as very important if new developments, access to Thorley village and loss of green space would be a 'consideration'.

The leaflet then outlines information based on electors registered as on February 2018. Unfortunately I am unable to understand why this information was given to help me to HAVE MY SAY.

If I compare this then to the data given in the formal request by the Town Council in their unlabelled table – based on the 2015 electoral register –I believe there is at least 2,100 electors difference. How am I supposed to know that the current proposed review is up-to-date and covers the point

Why your views are important that the council must seek to ensure that any proposals:

Promote effective and convenient local government;

Take into account any other arrangements for community representation or engagement in the area.

So as you can see, I am struggling to find actual evidence as to how any of the proposals will meet - what is written in Have your say - as to why my views are important when the TOR

refer to 'key documents to be made available' but as I am not sure what was a key document then as helpful as people tried to be the task became impossible. This included James Parker, CE of the Town Council – saying that East Herts would be the contact regarding this. As of yesterday he was unable to say what key documents were being referred to. Lack of any communication regarding where information is held has hindered my ability to make a reasoned and factual view of the proposal. Where is the evidence that the four criteria mentioned in the leaflet will be met by the proposal. Both levels of council are saying that it is up to the other to state these. In particular I was perturbed that members of the council felt that this proposal would

- reflect the identity and interest of the community in the area
- promote community cohesion

but omitted to add as an Aim of the Review 1.9 TOR that they should also consider any proposals on

The impact, the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

As far as I understand, from the leaflet, there is the implication that the change to taking over Thorley Parish Urban Ward the above would seriously impact on Thorley Parish as a whole – leaving less than 5 councillors in Thorley Parish Rural and consequentially leaving a redundant parish (ie less than 5 councillors for the parish). Also, by omitting (I think? As not totally clear to me) detailed data on developments to the North of BS then this proposed review cannot cover this criteria? Is this a partial review or a whole one. Due to the rapid developments being enacted or envisaged in the area, how often would these costly reviews have to occur – particularly if not many facts are made available. I am not sure who pays for this and whether the Town Council has any spare money to make their contribution? This will, I am sure be one of the points in the Report by Head of Democratic and Legal Support Service (DLSS) 16 December 2015 - as the Principal council with a consideration 2.2 conducts a review every 10-15 years – except in the case of areas with very low populations when less frequent reviews may be adequate, when finances are also considered – report dated December 2015 in essential reference paper A. Other than the anomalies of St Michaels Mead I am not sure that the population of Thorley parish has changed considerably since 1998 and the actual reasoning for the Town Council to now be focussing on making Thorley Parish council redundant has not become any clearer.

Sorry but I am still struggling 3.3 (Report DLSS) refers to other bodies'voluntary organisations – such as schools or health bodies' and whilst the Boys High School may have a vested interest in trying to move to the current Thorley Parish area – ie new premises funded by the sale of current land and new development I am not sure how much weight any of their views are given or only if their parents have their say as (DLSS Report) 4.3 'Council should seek to ensure adherence to the principle that ' each person's vote should be of equal weight....'. So whilst the schools in the area may have a view it would not meet any of the electorate management criteria.

It is only because I have requested more information about the review that I have received detailed proposal of the ward boundary changes. The Town Council offices only had one copy of the Have Your Say leaflet - outside on their Notice Board - but were unable to say or suggest that I try the Tourist Information shop. I used my initiative and they did in fact have a pile tucked in the corner. They were helpful and sent me an email of other sources of information. The library only had the Have Your Say leaflet. East Herts DC offices didn't have anything but did put me through, on the phone to the Electoral offices to John Williams. I felt only after they felt they should try and help me due to my insistence.

No-one has been able to provide me with a distribution list of what to whom has been sent. One comment from the DC was that 'we could not afford to send out this leaflet to everyone', when I said that I felt that although I live in South Ward – Thorley edge – that I and other local residents would be one who might have strong views of this proposal.

I am struggling. I cannot - other than the planned new development – comprehend why the Town Council can be said to be representing the local electorate and that they have outlined any reasons for making Thorley Parish in effect 'redundant or moribund'. Perhaps they have not even considered that this may be the effect. In their Plan Summary leaflet of BS Town Council Neighbourhood Plan for All Saints, Central, South and **part of Thorley 2016-2032** that states the District Plan 'envisages the removal from green belt of the site at Bishop's Stortford South. This is a very controversial part of the draft District Plan and likely to face severe opposition. The survey undertaken in December 2014 showed that the majority of residents oppose this.' However this proposal, in my opinion, is not going to 'protect the heritage of a medieval town, which is a large part of what makes it desirable.' (Town Council Neighbourhood Plan). There is then reference to 'well maintained rights of way' as 'Residents of the area have excellent access to a number of rural areas around the town and to the riverside.....including the Hertfordshire Way which runs south through Thorley Parish to the River Stort.' An article in this week's local paper is already talking about lost footpaths and the Hertfordshire Way in Bishop's Stortford.

Anyway quite interesting but I do feel strongly that Thorley Parish Council should remain intact with their two wards - with perhaps even a view to taking back some of its lost parishioners to previous developments so that they will be able to help ensure that this rural parish continues to provide a voice for a very small part of Bishop's Stortford but one that has a huge identity, strong community links, history for their own parishioners alongside many of their old parishioners that border their boundary. Taking the church as one example of the rural ward's own community centres for all ages, the Barnabus and Emanua Centre, local public house and the Hertfordshire Way are just a few of the interests that bring people to this side of town along with businesses (in buildings and I am sure private residences. Many of the residents and others adjoining the Thorley parish also gain many social activities that are run by charities for health and social events. These include, and by no means an exhaustive list, Sunday coffee/tea afternoons for locals and walkers alike (church), brownies, cubs etc, over 60s club, toddlers groups, cancer charities, educational activities, singing groups, flower festivals, U3A Thorley - set up as Bishop's Stortford was oversubscribed but I believe they link together. Many of these activities/events have very easy access for everyone - particularly elderly or the disabled.

Not many references made to actual solutions for the ageing society that we are supposed to be in – unless a care home is supposed to be the solution.

Extract of first two paragraphs re Barnabus Centre from web site

<http://www.stbarnabasbarn.co.uk/>

This website is the result of research into the architectural and social significance of a large 16th century farm barn in Thorley, near Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire.

The restoration and conversion of a pig barn into a stunning church and community centre in 1996 was the inspiration of the then Rector, Rev. Clive Slaughter. The St. Barnabas Centre now serves the parish as a church on Sundays and is used throughout the year by the community as halls for weddings, youth groups, conferences, music exams, school workshops, art and craft fairs and festivals. The cost of restoration, which amounted to approximately £1 million, was met by church fundraising and a substantial donation by a local benefactor.

Other extracts from St James's Church

Thorley in the early 14th Century was a relatively affluent settlement being a neighbouring parish to the important and prosperous market town of Bishop's Stortford.

the 15th Century, Thorley Manor acquired one of its most illustrious Lords, Sir Richard Whittington. As the legendary Dick Whittington, three times Lord Mayor of London, he made most of his fortune lending money in the City of London. His name, however, now lives on at Richard Whittington School and on Whittington Way. Popular folk lore likes to adopt the successive cats that frequent the church as the local descendant of Dick's famous cat!

19th century The cost of these very necessary repairs and additions were largely borne by the Lord of the Manor, Lord Ellenborough and by Mr. B.J.L. Frere of Twyford House, whose family have continued to endow the church for over a hundred years. Shows a historic links between Thorley and Twyford (ie Pig Lane and the Mill)

20th century Our church should not be regarded only as a memorial to the heritage of the past. It has to serve as the living, spiritual focal point for the expanding parish of Thorley. Parishioners who lost their lives in the century's two World Wars are remembered on the war memorials inside the church and similarly, tended graves outside are indications that loved ones are not forgotten.

<http://www.stbarnabasbarn.co.uk/>

I believe that the **Emmaus Centre** (run by St James's Church) was built due to donations from Thorley Parishioners – probably mostly the urban ward of Thorley. Thorley has a very deep history being named in the domesday book. It is one of the 100 parishes in Hertfordshire, their aim being to It would seem that the nature lane run by Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust would be split in half with the proposed new boundary.

History of Thorley

Thorley is listed in the Domesday book as "Torlei", belonging to Geoffrey de Mandeville, a notable Norman baron. During the reign of Edward the Confessor, Thorley Manor belonged to Earl Tostig.

I have read elsewhere that Whittington Way was named in memory of Dick Whittington as the link to Thorley village. I am not a historian of the area but I am sure that there are many Thorley people who could relate why for this side of Stortford, Thorley, is their identity. They do not say they live in Stortford, they live in Thorley – an area of Bishops Stortford.

As part of the Millennium celebrations, a decision was made at the annual *Thorley Parish Meeting* in 1999 to produce a book about the past 100 years of *Thorley*. An East Herts District Council Millennium Fund grant was received for the project.....perhaps acknowledging the history of Thorley by the District.....

Thorley is one of **the hundred parishes** charity's parish - The Society aims to increase awareness, enjoyment and care of the Hundred Parishes. We encourage people to learn about the area's character and history and to appreciate its heritage first-hand by visiting. We particularly encourage healthy recreational activity and this website includes a series of interesting walks, linked to public transport. We aim to expand this series and in due course also to offer cycle routes. From time to time we arrange guided walks for Society members.

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of The Hundred Parishes, especially its features of historic, architectural and wildlife interest.

The Hundred Parishes Society is incorporated in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee (number 8124462). It is Registered Charity number 1157891. Its registered office is 2 Greenfields, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex CM24 8AH

Herts & Middx wildlife Trust – I believe, but due to lack of more detailed maps, that this area will be split by the proposed new boundary.

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) just south of Bishop's Stortford, noted for its botanical diversity.

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust's Thorley Wash Nature Reserve has been designated as being in good ecological condition by Natural England, the Government's advisers on nature conservation. The reserve is a site of special scientific interest being one of best examples of 'wash grassland' in the UK.

I have not had the time to contact either of these last two organisations but will, as a follow up to my initial research will be contacting them.

Summing up – Thorley has deep history and should not, in my view, be renamed, lost or be a convenient planning ploy to meet central government targets on housing that the District and Town Council seems to deem more important than the views of the local electorate of Thorley and surrounding areas who rely on this beautiful parish that enables people to enjoy their day-to-day leisure and activities whether they be walkers, runners cyclists, horse

riders, bird watchers, and so on. Currently this green space has many footpaths and starts from a site of special interest, through farmland meeting the Southern Country Park that has access to the burial footbridge to St James's Church alongside Thorley village pond meeting the edge of St Michaels Mead but easily able to access footpaths and farmland to Sawbridgeworth and Much Hadham ward. The boundaries should remain as they are in the South and the Town Council should not merge the South Ward with Thorley Parish urban ward. There has been no information available to members of the electorate as to how the Town council would meet any of the four criteria listed in the Have Your Say leaflet and in particular has, for whatever reason, chosen to confuse the review process by focussing only on the south of town boundaries with no reference to the new developments to the north of the town. I did expect some evidence by the town council as to how this proposal would meet the guidance given by the 2007 act along with perhaps thought of how new developments would ensure existing links and the required cohesion of new groups, individuals and businesses within its boundaries and adjoining ones so that other planned developments in the districts can meet expansion of other major, international infrastructures whether that is Stansted Airport or faster train services and so on.

For a sustainable review to go towards meeting any of the criteria mentioned in the leaflet then there should, in my view, take a holistic view of all new developments and in particular the larger ones in the North. Adjacent links to other parishes should be shown, at least that there has been consultation with them at this stage.

I only hope that if there has been a strong voice to those who have the time to take part in this part of the consultation is followed in this decision process – albeit that there might be only a difference of a few percentage as to for or against what, at this stage, has been proposed – that the District Council listens to the local electorate on this important proposed change and then makes the appropriate democratic decision.

OTTRA

OLD THORLEY & TWYFORD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

John Williams Esq
Electoral Services Officer
East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Herts SG13 8EQ

4th April 2018

Ref: Community Governance Review – Town Council proposed changes to Thorley Parish Civil Boundary

BACKGROUND ON OTTRA

1. I am Sylvia McDonald, Thorley parishioner, formerly parish council chairman. I write as chairman and representative of OTTRA [Old Thorley and Twyford Park Residents' Association], putting forward in this first part of our submission OTTRA comments on conduct of the Review.
2. OTTRA first existed as the Old Thorley Community Association, formed in 1994 to give community support to Thorley Parish Council in its fight against continual threat over the years from town coalescence, encroachment and urban sprawl into Thorley parish greenbelt countryside and farmland.
3. After the war, farmland in the Plantation area of Thorley was sold and Twyford Park housing built on the north side of Thorley Lane. Old Thorley and Twyford Park dwellers eventually joined

forces to become OTTRA. The feeling of local community spirit pervades, as the second part of our submission will show

FOREWORD

4. The Community Governance Review of the town boundary with Thorley is a momentous and complex matter having import for hundreds of people. It has sprung from the blue, heralded by a flyer referencing directly or indirectly numerous on-line documents and inviting electorate response within a 7-week period, 3 weeks of which would be taken up with school and national holidays.
5. It has not been possible, given the difficulties met with information accessibility described below, for OTTRA to collate, before the initial submission deadline of 6th April, the plentiful evidence from its membership that we would wish to provide in support of our argument of strong opposition to the town council's request for boundary alteration.
6. Recent events pertaining to Examination in Public of the draft District Plan have complicated understanding of the electoral issues now being raised. In the view of many local people, the 'Thorley' story is central to the reason why this Review is being carried out.
7. OTTRA, in spite of best efforts, can only in this first part of our submission provide outline of membership views. I respectfully request that EHDC accept the second part of our submission after the end of school Spring holidays.

DIFFICULTIES WITH ACCESSING INFORMATION

8. The leaflet Have Your Say tells readers that "full" information on TOR, timetables and maps is available at EHDC offices, and invites readers to 'raise any queries' with Electoral Services. In the TOR it is written that "[hard copy] of terms of reference will be made available at the district council offices and at other venues within the area under review". This was not so.
9. Members have contacted both district and town council offices, but without satisfactory outcome. It was found that the district council offices had no information on the Review at all; that ill-informed officers could not provide a list of "other venues" or even the TOR reference to "key documents to be made

available"; that leaflets had not been received by all households [one council officer volunteering the information that the council could not afford to send copies out to everyone]; that leaflets were available in town only at the tourist Information centre and library; that in the leaflet narrative, the words parish, town, and ward were used indiscriminately throughout, leading to confused understanding of textual meaning by layman readers; and that maps provided were too small for boundaries to be identified in any detail.

TIMING

10. We would question the timing of the town council's request.

From a report in October 2015 by the head of Democratic and Legal Support Services we learn that boundary change was first mooted three years ago. It was written that BSTC had *"resolved formally to request a review of the ward boundaries within the parish of Bishop's Stortford and of the parish boundary of Bishop's Stortford having regard to: Development which has occurred since the boundaries were last reviewed, which has 'crossed' the parish boundary and, members argue, caused ward boundaries to be inappropriate, and Development likely to occur either as already consented in outline or full or envisaged within the draft District Plan, which breaches the parish boundary particularly towards the South.* Why has this lain so long in the town council's pending tray?

11. Also with regard to timing, we note that under the 2007 Act periodic reviews can take place every 15 years or sooner, and that "reviews must take into account impact on community cohesion, size, population and community boundaries [in order to] provide effective local government". Effective government in itself depends on town/parish spending of precept and value for money as perceived by residents. Data given in the Have Your Say leaflet takes no account of the massive increase in population to be brought about by town development in north and south. It follows that whatever the Review recommendations made in October 2018, the effects on residents gauged in this Review will change and another be needed.

12. Moreover, how will residents confidently know what they will be voting for in May 2019?

REASON FOR REVIEW

13. The only reason given in the Have Your Say leaflet is found in the section Issues under consideration, where it is written "The town council identified areas of development to the south of the town that cross the current boundary and asked EHDC to consider whether the southern boundary of Bishop's Stortford ?parish? should be redrawn to follow the existing district ward boundary". In the Terms of Reference, however, also written by EHDC, the reason is written differently as "Parts of the areas identified [for development to the south of town] are currently in Thorley Parish but the Town Council considers the developments are, or will be, seen as part of Bishop's Stortford". Further it should be noted that, significantly, Section 2 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews recognises only a need for "reviews in circumstances such as where there have been changes in population", not where there may/will be in the future.
14. With reference to who would have opportunity to read the above extracts, EHDC should take into account that (a) not all householders received the Have Your Say leaflet, (b) TOR were not made available or easily accessible to enquirers, and (c) the 54-page Guidance document is a remote publication.
15. OTTRA believes that the town council, in its long-held determination to manage and control development to the south of town, which OTTRA residents know as the Whittington Way site and which was refused planning permission at ministerial level in 2011, has been making decisions that run contrary to expectation of ethical behaviour and are demonstrably only in the town's interests, not those of the parish. From this point of view, boundary alteration is therefore relevant only with respect to which authority can claim control of the development and accordingly add to its precept.
16. Yes, the position regarding boundary anomalies would be stated correctly if in the Have Your Say leaflet the reason had been written: "The town council identified an area of development to the south....". because this is a reference to the 200 or so

houses in the St Michael's Mead estate, built in a remote corner to the west of the parish in the 1990s when the town bypass was also constructed across parish land.

17. The fact is being ignored that the town council has been remiss in its responsibility for effective governance for over twenty years. The sad result has been a split across three town wards for a 911-house development that was marketed by Countryside Properties as a new village but which did not take on any semblance of community in all that time. Para 15 of the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews is especially relevant to this situation. In the interests of St Michael's Mead cohesion, OTTRA would support the town council's wish to 'put right' this anomaly.

OUTLINE OF OTTRA COMMENTS

18. Many OTTRA residents are confused about why a boundary change is being considered. In a local newspaper, the town council's justification is given as "tidying up urban boundary anomalies" and "making governance easier", but nowhere does EHDC make reference to implications for the rural areas of Thorley parish. The latest threat facing Thorley would seem to be from enforced parish redundancy and consequential abandonment of a small number of rural settlements.
19. Seeing that OTTRA comprises residents in both parish and town jurisdictions, what we do know from local knowledge is that existing Thorley parish governance is rated as being community supportive with there being no perceived need for change, while on the other hand, however, urban town governance has generally been rated as unsatisfactory for a long while. On this basis why would parishioners or town residents see extension of town jurisdiction through boundary change as advantageous?
20. It is not surprising that OTTRA, and also other Civic Federation members, consider that town council motivation for making this proposal is suspect and underhand. It is being seen as a way to transfer, from parish to town council, jurisdiction of the coveted Whittington Way site that draft East Herts District Plan policies [still under examination] have allocated for development, thereby ensuring that development in Thorley would be under

town council control before the town and district council elections in May 2019

21. In the meantime, the town council has stayed confident that the Examiner will allow development in Thorley and believes that in readiness it already has two good reasons for claiming control.
22. First, some while ago, for purposes of representation at district level, Thorley parish urban ward [comprising Thorley Street and Pig Lane] was included in the town's South Ward.
23. Secondly, and expressly for the purpose of enabling town to control all aspects of the development at town/parish level, the town council had, in breach of the Localism Act, drawn the boundary of the town's Southern Neighbourhood Plan to include the same area [at the same time omitting the parish rural ward] and had developed NP policies without the participation of any parishioner except the parish council chairman, whose agreement was required in law and who was then persuaded to accept the situation and take a seat on the town NP committee.
24. Then came the breach of policy in the draft District Plan regarding policy disallowing housing development in Class 3 villages. The late acceptance by EHDC that Thorley is a Class 3 village should have removed threat from Thorley. But no. EHDC and town council are attempting to remove the site from the parish by proposing an alteration to the town civil boundary.
25. OTTRA cannot see why, in the unwelcome event of massive new build at Whittington Way, Thorley parish should give up its autonomy to the town council. This would be tantamount to telling Thorley people that their parish council was inefficient as a civil authority.
26. This is undeniably untrue, given the lone achievements of the parish council during St Michel's Mead development in the 1990s listed below:
 - preservation of our rich footpath/bridleway network,
 - planting of roadside bunding,
 - stopping of preserved tree felling in Thorley Lane,
 - initial reed design and birdlife care by the owner of Brook Farm on the developers' balancing pond in Moor Hall Lane [now an attractive lake for fishing and photography],

- retention of landscape vista where possible in the open greenbelt space area later 'sold' by developers to EHDC with a large sum for its future maintenance as the Southern Park,
- stopping of usage of same open greenbelt space for formal or intrusive activities [such as football, indoor bowling, amphitheatre] needing clubhouse building, loudspeakers, lighting, outdoor seating, toilets, carparking and road access [Note: it was the parish vision of a beautiful tranquil place for wildlife and community wellbeing that has given the townspeople a wonderful place, Southern Park, set in an extensive greenbelt countryside of footpaths in all directions, for their families to enjoy in perpetuity on their doorstep],
- retention/diversion of the developers' haul road to give to hamlet dwellers a narrow B road access [Obrey Way] to the village and Church, and to village dwellers in a severed part of Thorley Lane access in the other direction to the new bypass [Note: EHDC is now claiming Obrey Way as a 'natural' boundary, doubling up for the 'containable' new community and new greenbelt edges that will delineate the town's new land grab],
- acquisition of footbridge across the bypass to the Church, an invaluable and hard fought-for asset for everyone.

27. Community Governance Guidance, citing the 2007 Act, says that principal councils will "need to take account of the views of local people". In this first part of our submission OTTRA would suggest that EHDC give careful consideration to:

- i. prudence of the proposed boundary alteration, given the 'abandonment' of the rural ward of Thorley parish, and
- ii. validity of the town council's justification for civil boundary alteration, given the explanatory paras written above.

NEW COUNTER PROPOSAL

28. Given OTTRA membership distrust of town council motivation and EHDC's decision to carry out a Review, OTTRA is considering the feasibility of proposing a counter boundary alteration. In this

regard, OTTRA would draw the attention of EHDC to the following paragraphs in the Guidance on Community Governance Reviews:

- Para 28. Principal councils should use their knowledge and awareness of local issues when deciding whether to undertake a review.
 - Para 35. Principal councils must consider the wider picture of community governance in carrying out their reviews. In some areas there may be well established forms of community governance such as local residents' associations.....
 - Para 16. A community governance review offers an opportunity to put in place strong, clearly defined boundaries, tied to firm ground features, and remove anomalous parish boundaries that exist in England. Reviews also offer the chance to principal councils to consider the future of what may have become redundant or moribund parishes.
29. OTTRA will produce the second part of its submission with all speed and trusts that it is acceptable to Electoral Services to receive OTTRA response in two parts.

Appendix to Consultation form.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW – RESPONSE FROM THORLEY PARISH COUNCIL 4/4/18

Reasons for response to boundary change proposals.

It is with great surprise that when the Thorley Parish boundary changes proposals were notified to us that it was as a request from Bishops Stortford Town Council which seemingly had its conception at a BSTC- Localism and Strategy Committee meeting in 2014. Present at this meeting were 3 councillors and BSTC- C.E.O. – no chairman, and a temporary chairman was appointed for the meeting. I doubt whether the proposal would have been made if there had been a full attendance. BSTC's stated reasons for requesting the review seem to be ironing out wrinkles and tidying up anomalies. The official reason, is as stated in EHDC's CGR of BSTC's Terms of Reference 1.6 which clearly indicates the desire to take over the new developments in Thorley Parish, and thus, the parish itself. The wrinkles and anomalies are inferred as being that some residences and residents are in a different electoral ward or parish from their neighbours. Moving the boundaries will not prevent this, there will always be someone whose neighbour is in a different parish or ward. The numbers of houses quoted in the general ward boundary changes is minimal and do not justify a review. The largest change is in the South ward where a takeover of all, apart from about 20 houses in Thorley Parish is proposed. This proposal shows that the proposal has not been clearly thought through, unless BSTC wish only to have control of the undeveloped BS South site, otherwise, there is no apparent justification.

The proposals demonstrate no apparent advantages to any residents or improvement of services provided. The proposals do not demonstrate anything that is reflective of identity or interests of the community in the area concerned. The proposals do not cite any provisions for effective or convenient local government or local services improvement of the area. Recognising that statement para. 8.4 in the terms of reference, does not automatically change the electoral ward areas within the proposed new parish boundaries, there is no guarantee that BSTC will get what they are purportedly seeking.

Suggestions on changes as proposed by BSTC.

The boundary change as proposed is illogical. If the proposed new developments in B.S. South gain approval, then the far more logical proposal would be for the fringe areas of B.S. adjacent to Obrey Way and Whittington Way, to be incorporated into Thorley Parish and making those existing main roadways the Thorley Parish boundary – This proposal would fulfil all county requirements for a CGR, it would involve a very small number of dwellings and it would have minimal effect on electoral wards. Thorley Parish Council will in the near future request a Community Governance Review to propose just that.

Cllr.R.Lumsden,

Thorley Parish Council

[chair]

THORLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Your ref:

Date: March 2018

Electoral Services
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Herts
SG13 8EQ

For the attention of John Williams

Dear Mr Williams

Thorley Parish Council endorses the decision below.

REFERENCE TO: COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW OF BISHOPS STORTFORD TOWN COUNCIL
BOUNDARY

Name:-

Address:-

I object to the proposed Thorley boundary change – the proposed changes do not demonstrate any of the terms of reference

Signed :-

I agree with the proposed Thorley Parish boundary change

Signed:-