

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW
A TOWN COUNCIL FOR KETTERING?



DRAFT



Introduction

Kettering Borough Council is consulting on whether or not to set up a Town Council for the town of Kettering. This document explains what the issues are, asks a series of questions and invites people to let us know their views. The deadline for responding is **ccccc**

Kettering town is the only part of the Borough of Kettering which does not have a town or parish council. It is expected that the Borough Council will be abolished as part of local government reform in the county, with effect from April 2021. Therefore the Council has decided to consult on the creation of a town council which would take on some of the civic

leadership role for Kettering, carry out a number of representative roles on behalf of local people and possibly undertake other functions as determined by the new unitary council. The new unitary council will replace both Kettering Borough and Northamptonshire County Council.

What is a community governance review?



This is a formal process for the Council to consider making changes to parishing arrangements in the Borough. It is governed by statutory guidance. After forming some views about the proposals, the Council must carry out a formal consultation, take the responses on board, publish some final proposals, also for consultation, and then make a final decision.

We expect any final decision on this review to be made in December 2019. The statutory guidance can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-governance-reviews-guidance

How to respond

This document is divided into several sections, each setting out some facts and options, and then asking a series of questions.

To respond to the consultation either:

- Complete the questionnaire attached to this document – if you are accessing this through our website, simply press send when you have finished, or if you have a paper copy, send it to us at

Community Governance Review, Kettering Borough Council, Municipal Offices, Bowling Green Rd, Kettering, NN15 7QX

- Write to us with your thoughts without using the questionnaire, or to supplement the questionnaire, at the above address, or by email at **towncouncilfeedback@kettering.gov.uk**



Should we have a town council?

Kettering Town has a population of about 50,000 people. When the current Borough Council is abolished, it will, unlike other towns and villages across North Northamptonshire, have no other representative body than the new unitary council, which will be looking after and balancing the interests of 330,000 people spread over dozens of towns and villages. Corby, Rushden, Wellingborough and many other smaller towns will have a town council

which can represent their particular interests, foster community identity and deliver some very local services to their areas. The Borough Council believes therefore that Kettering should also have a town council, so it can champion local causes and be a ready made vehicle for delivering very local services, should the new unitary council decide to delegate some functions to willing town and parish councils.



Up until 1974, Kettering has a local council distinct from the surrounding area, which was absorbed into the Borough of Kettering, alongside neighbouring towns and villages. Those smaller towns and villages retained their town and parish councils whilst Kettering did not. Kettering therefore has a tradition of independent and distinct local government going back over 100 years and a Town Council would help preserve that tradition, albeit in a different form.

Any new Town Council will have the power to raise a precept on the Council Tax, as parishes across the country do now. This will be an additional charge on the Council Tax- on top of the charge levied by the new unitary council, and the by the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner. This

charge will pay for the running costs of the new Council, and any services it delivers to local people. It is impossible at this stage to predict what that charge will be and it will depend on the extent to which the new Council develops services locally or is asked to provide services by other organisations. The range of parish precepts across North Northamptonshire varies widely depending on how active the Council is. Nevertheless, local people can expect to pay something in future.

The very first precept would have to be set for the Town Council before it comes into existence, by the Borough Council. In that first year, the precept is likely to be modest in size and cover only essential running costs.

Question

1

Do you agree that a town council should be created for Kettering for the reasons above?

Question

2

Do you agree that the new Town Council should come into being at the same time that the new unitary council comes into being?

Should Kettering continue to have a Mayor?

Kettering Borough Council currently has a civic Mayor. This role will disappear when the Borough Council is abolished. It is unlikely that a Mayor will be created for the new North Northamptonshire Council. Kettering has had a mayor since 1938. The role embodies the town, is a symbol and focus for civic pride and presence and carries out a wide range of functions during the year, celebrating local achievements, raising money for local charities and representing the town socially and formally.



The Borough Council feels that the Mayoralty should be preserved and that a Town Council would enable the tradition of having a Mayor, someone elected locally, to continue. The Borough Council would transfer the current civil regalia to any new Town Council, and the civic regalia could be changed back to that which applied before 1974, probably using the pre 1974 coat of arms. (subject to approval by the Herald at Arms)

An alternative way to preserve the Mayoralty is to create Charter Trustees instead of a Town Council. Charter Trustees would look after the civic regalia, maintain the office of Mayor and be custodians of the Borough Charter (the royal proclamation setting up the Mayoralty in 1938). Charter Trustees would automatically be those councillors elected to the new unitary council whose wards covered the town of Kettering. They would not be separately elected. They would elect one of their number to be the Mayor each year, as would a Town Council. They would be able to raise a precept like a Town Council to cover their running costs, but they would not carry out any other functions. Charter Trustees could not co-exist with a Town Council.

The estimated value of the civic regalia, plate and other features of the Mayor's office is approximately £160,000.

The Mayor would need an office, or parlour, to operate from, and would probably need some secretarial assistance and transport. These costs can be borne by either a Town Council or Charter Trustees. Currently the Mayoralty costs approximately £22,000 per annum, but these costs can be varied in the future if the new organisation decides to do so.

Question

3

- a. **Should the Borough Council preserve the Mayoralty and pass all the Mayoral and civic regalia to any new Town Council?**
- b. **Should the Borough Council preserve the Mayoralty by instead setting up Charter Trustees?**



What would the Town Council do if it existed?

Relatively few duties fall on town and parish councils, so whilst there are activities that most town and parish councils are engaged in, most of these are voluntary, and most local council activities will reflect local priorities and interests.

A Town Council in Kettering would be expected to do the following as a minimum:

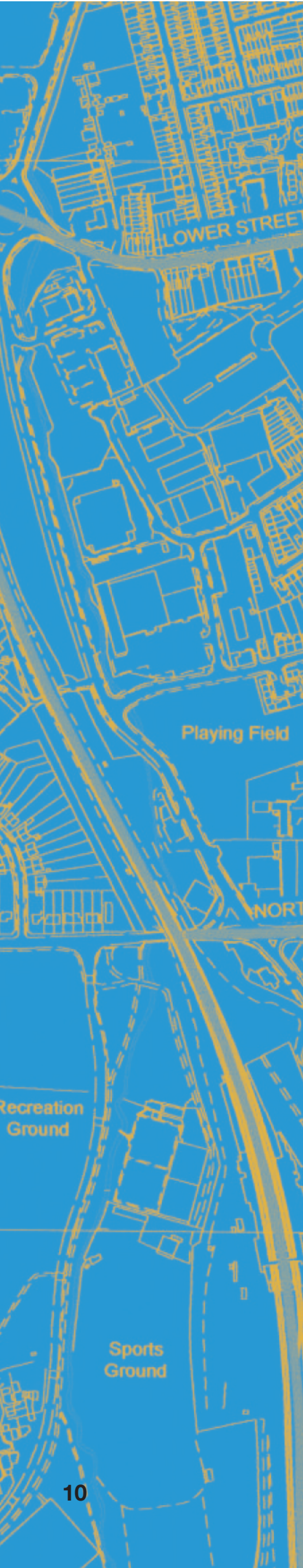
- Maintain the Mayoralty and civic regalia and insignia
- Maintain and hold the Market Charter and consequently manage the Wednesday, Friday and Saturday markets
- Respond to any new demands for allotment space (a statutory duty placed on parish councils)
- General representation of the interests of the town, including commenting on planning applications and other consultations by statutory bodies
- Be represented on partnership bodies and outside bodies, as required or invited.



Consultees are asked what other responsibilities or roles they believe the Town Council should be engaged in, should it be created. It will be for the new unitary Council to decide whether and what to delegate to the Town Council from its own roles and responsibilities and the Town Council could also chose to supplement any services provided by other agencies.

Question 4

What roles and responsibilities do you think any new Town Council should consider adopting, on top of the list on page 8?



What should Kettering Town Council's boundary be? How will changes impact on neighbouring parishes?

The current boundary of Kettering – the unparished area – is shown on Map A opposite. It is largely unchanged since 1974, except that the Parish of Barton Seagrave was formed in 2007 and detached from Kettering at the time.

Kettering is a growth town, and planning approval was given in 2010 for a 5500 house urban extension to the east of the existing built up area, known now as Hanwood Park. That development has now started in earnest and will be built out over the next few years. In 2014, when the Borough Council last conducted a community governance review, it was agreed in principle that the town boundary would be extended eastwards, up to the Alledge Brook, and that the intervening area, currently part of Cranford parish, would be incorporated from the point at which Hanwood Park started to be built. That time has now arrived. The current boundaries between Kettering, Barton

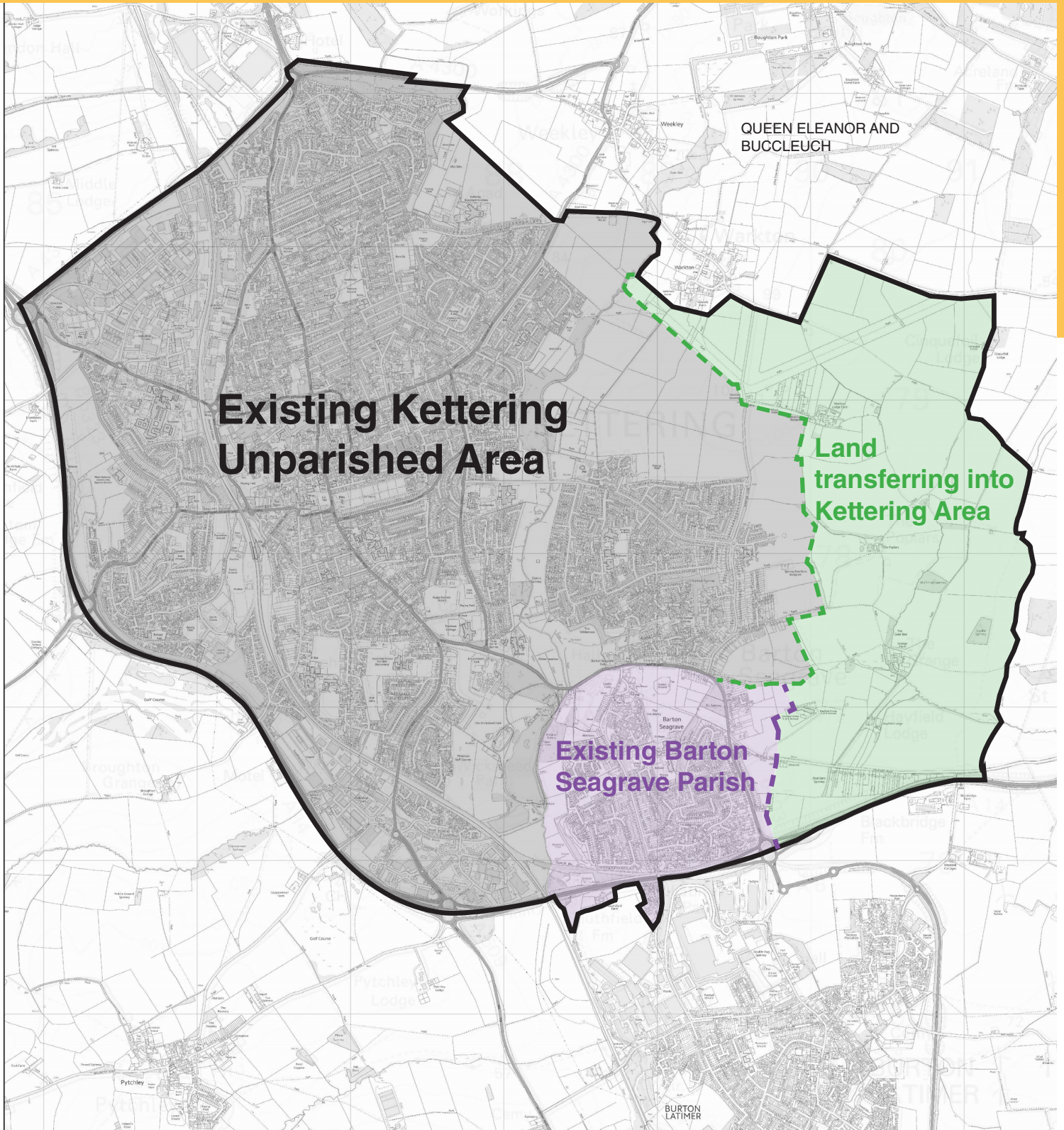
Seagrave and Kettering areas would be meaningless once the development has been completed.

A connected issue is the boundary between Kettering and Barton Seagrave parish. Barton is also a growing parish, and Hanwood Park development will impinge upon it as well. Barton Seagrave Parish Council has asked for its northern boundary to be reviewed with Kettering, and the development of Hanwood Park means that the eastern boundary should also be reviewed, to ensure a sensible boundary is established between it and the newly extended parts of Kettering.

When drawing up parish boundaries, the Council has to have regard to the existence of natural communities and at the same time, ensure that boundaries are easy to understand and rely on existing landscape features such as roads or rivers to mark them out.

For further information on Hanwood Park visit www.kettering.gov.uk/hanwoodpark

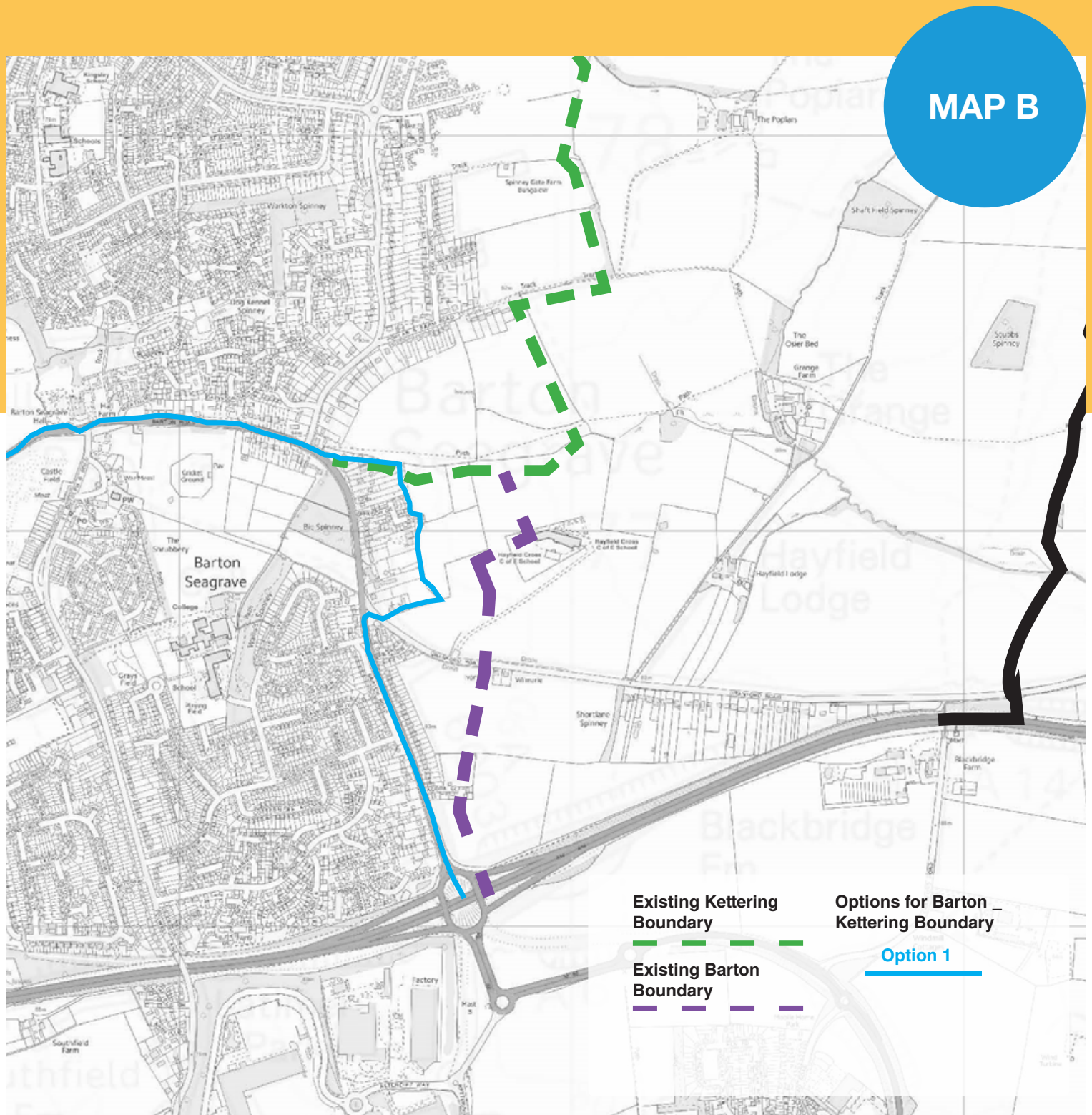
Map A



Three options have been developed for how the boundary between Kettering and Barton Seagrave could be drawn. These are shown on maps B to D overlaid.

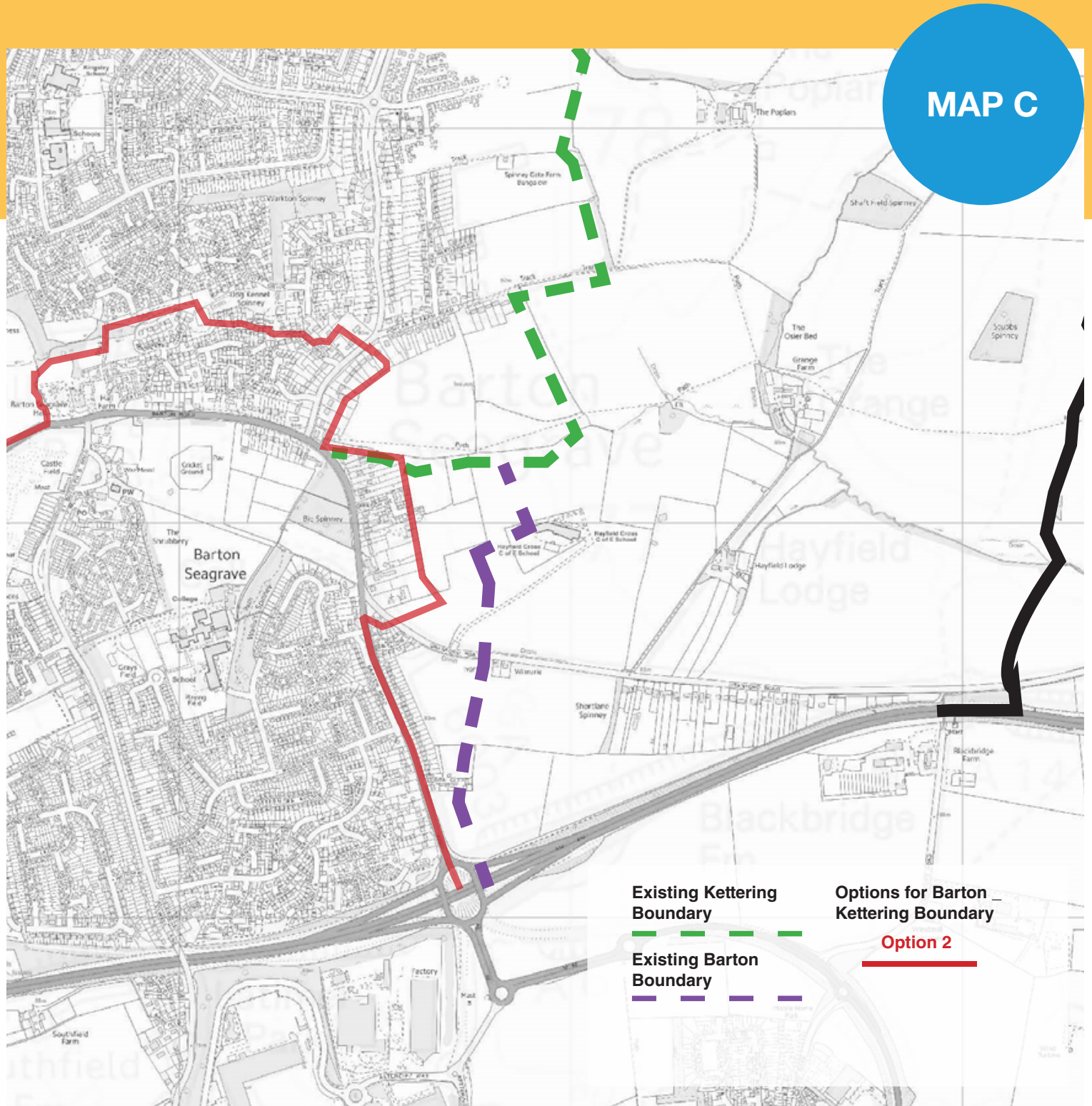
Option 1

Map B shows the northern and eastern boundary of Barton Seagrave as following the line of the former A6 road, except for houses on the eastern side of this road north of Cranford Rd. This keeps most of the existing parish intact except for the houses south of Cranford Rd and east of the old A6.



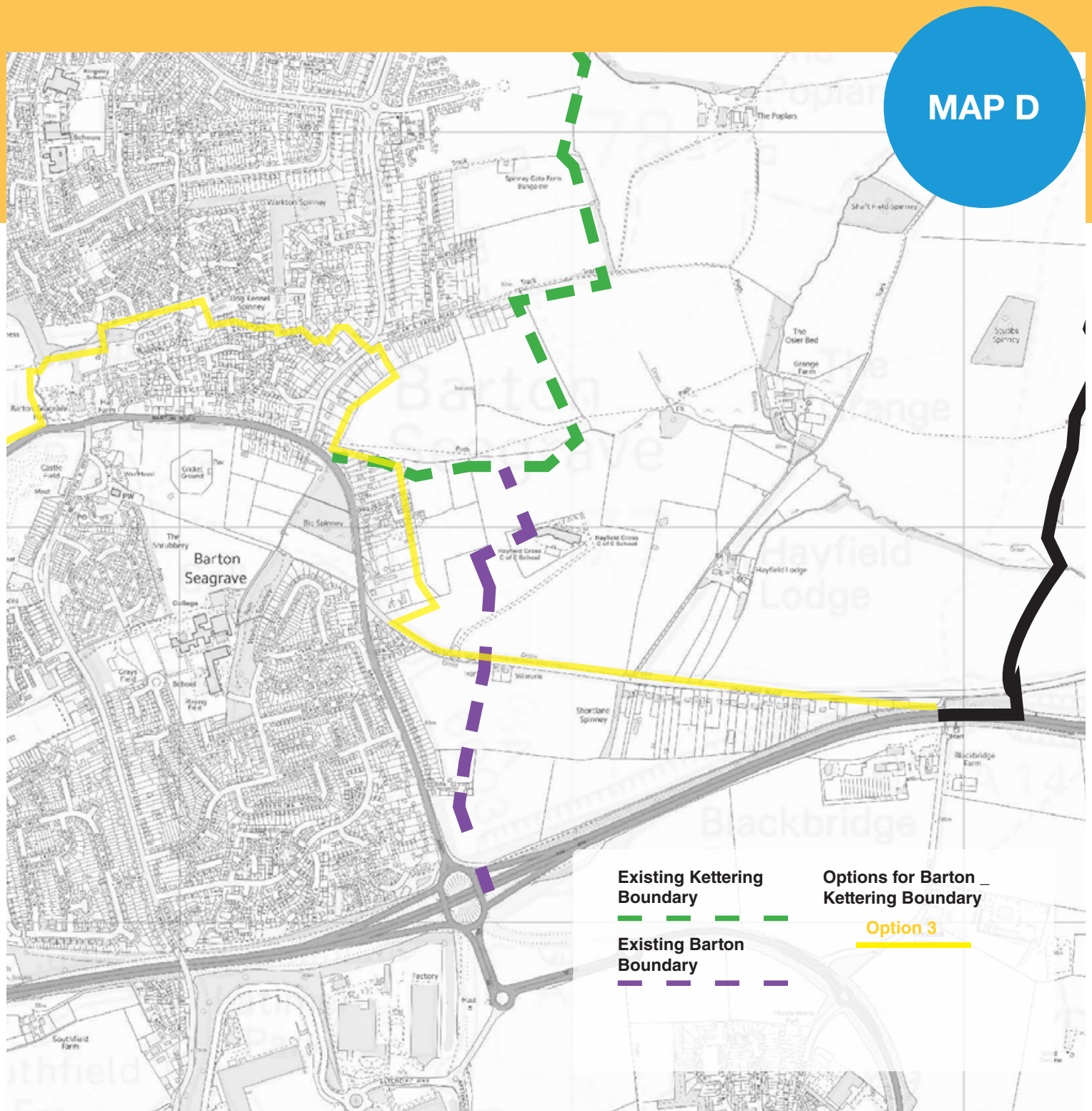
Option 2

Map C shows the same eastern boundary but in the north incorporates an existing area of housing currently in Kettering town. This area is anomalous in that it is included within the Borough ward of Barton Seagrave. (although not the county division of Wicksteed), but does not sit within the parish. The area does include Barton Hall and some of the older parts of the village of Barton Seagrave, and the parish council feels that it identified more with Barton Seagrave than the Ise lodge estate to which it is adjacent.

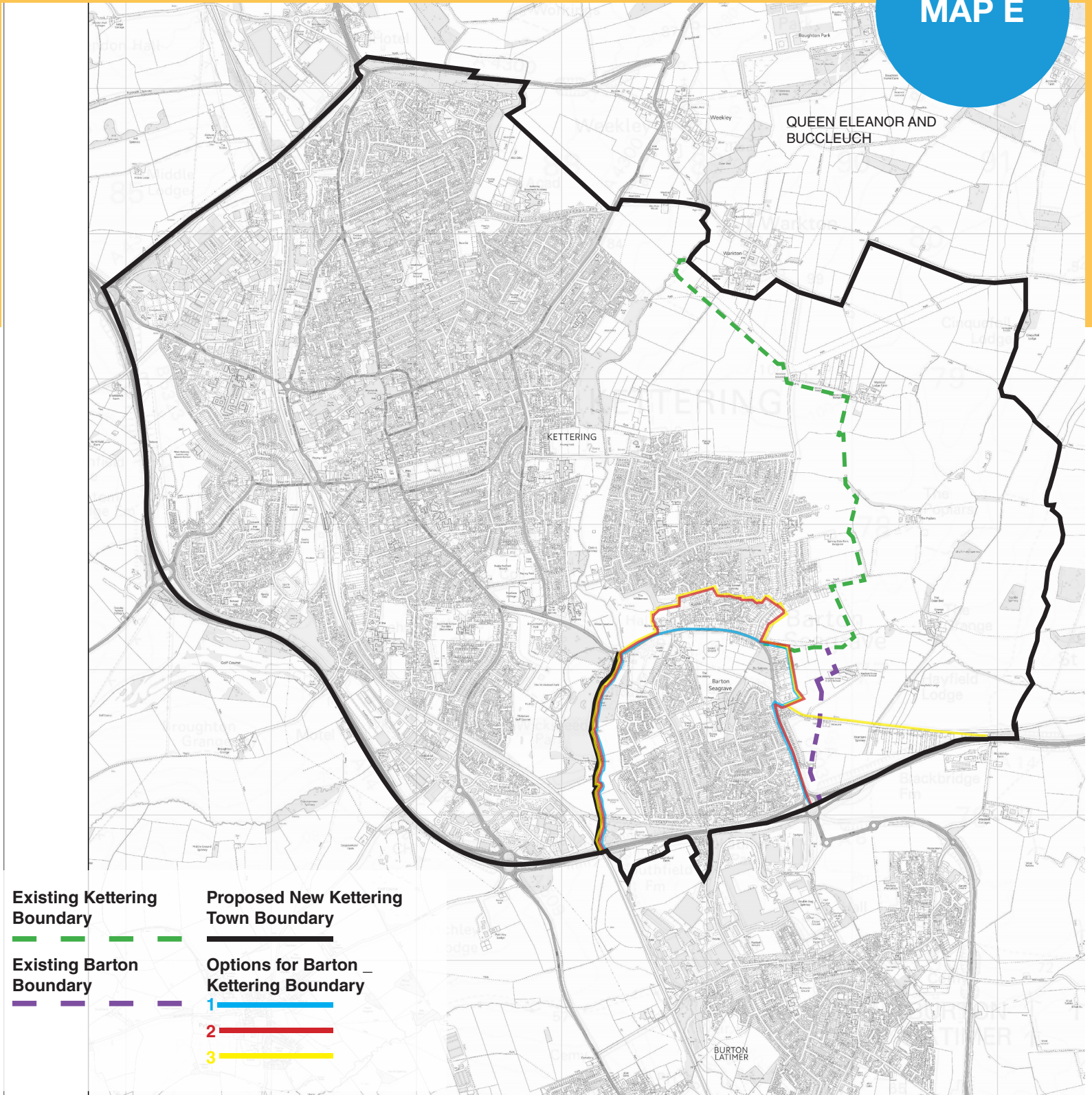


Option 3

Map D takes the boundaries set out in Map C and adds a further area – the whole of the land between the A14 and Cranford Rd and east of the former A6. This would retain within Barton Seagrave a small number of houses south of Cranford Rd currently in the parish, but add in the new development taking place at the moment and an older range of houses on Cranford Rd itself which have hitherto been part of Cranford Parish.



By way of summary, Map E therefore shows the overall boundary of Kettering including the three options for Barton Seagrave.





There is no intention to change the southern boundary of Barton Seagrave but the opportunity exists to tidy up the northern boundary of Burton Latimer so that it runs along the middle of the A14 rather than weaving in and out of it as now. There are two areas of Barton Seagrave which extend south of the A14; residents in these areas voted to remain in Barton Seagrave in 2000 when asked rather than join Burton Latimer and there is no evidence that any change of view has taken place since.

**Question
5**

Do you concur that the urban extension of Hanwood Park should be treated as part of Kettering town as it is built out?

**Question
6**

Which of the three options for the boundary between Barton Seagrave and Kettering do you prefer?

How many councillors should the Town Council have and how should the town be sub-divided into wards for electoral purposes?

The Borough Council has looked at a number of options for how Kettering town can be best represented by elected members. Currently, there are 20 Borough Councillors who represent 9 wards on Kettering Borough Council and five County Councillors who represent five county divisions on Northamptonshire County Council. In the new unitary authority, in its first term, there will be 15 councillors representing five wards, although three of those councillors will also represent an area to the east of Kettering as well.

In coming to a view about the number of councillors the town council should comprise and how the town should be divided into wards, the Council has applied the following principles.

- Each councillor should represent a broadly similar number of electors as all other councillors (this is required by current electoral rules)
- Each ward should reflect natural communities within the town, as far as is practical in a contiguous built up area
- There should be minimal change, given that a larger boundary review into electoral areas will be conducted early in the life of the new unitary council
- There should be some substantial degree of match between town council wards and the wards for the new unitary authority, for simplicity, of administration and to help public understanding of those wards.

The Council considered five options, but decided that one option stood out as best satisfying all these criteria and this is the option recommended within this consultation. The other four options examined can be found here ([link](#)).

The preferred option is to retain the existing Borough wards and retain the same level of representation – that is; 20 councillors. The current ward boundaries are shown on the map on page above. Ise ward will extend all the way to the Alledge Brook on this arrangement.

Question

7

Do you agree with the proposal to have 20 councillors elected from 9 wards based on the current boundaries (allowing for any consequential change resulting from the exact boundary of Barton Seagrave and Kettering?)

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS - RESPONSE FORM

Question 1

Do you agree that a town council should be created for Kettering?

Question 2

Do you agree that the new Town Council should come into being at the same time that the new unitary council comes into being?

Question 3

- a. Should the Borough Council preserve the Mayoralty and pass all the Mayoral and civic regalia to any new Town Council?
- b. Should the Borough Council preserve the Mayoralty by instead setting up Charter Trustees?

Question 4

What roles and responsibilities do you think any new Town Council should consider adopting, on top of the list above?

Question 5

Do you concur that the urban extension of Hanwood Park should be treated as part of Kettering town as it is built out?

Question 6

Which of the three options for the boundary between Barton Seagrave and Kettering do you prefer?

Question 7

Do you agree with the proposal to have 20 councillors elected from 9 wards based on the current boundaries (allowing for any consequential change resulting from the exact boundary of Barton Seagrave and Kettering?)

YOUR DETAILS

Name

Address

Organisation (if applicable)



To respond to the consultation either:

- Complete the questionnaire attached to this document – if you are accessing this through our website, simply press send when you have finished, or if you have a paper copy, send it to us at

**Community Governance Review, Kettering Borough Council, Municipal Offices,
Bowling Green Rd, Kettering, NN15 7QX**

- Write to us with your thoughts without using the questionnaire, or to supplement the questionnaire, at the above address, or by email at **towncouncilfeedback@kettering.gov.uk**