

10.00am, Thursday, 30 April 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Ward Proposals – Consultation Response

Item number	8.2
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	City wide

Executive summary

The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland issued its proposals for reconfiguration of wards on 19 March 2015 and requested comments from the Council as part of a two month consultation period.

This report outlines the proposals and provides an overview of matters for inclusion in the Council's response.

Links

Coalition pledges
Council outcomes
Single Outcome Agreement

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Ward Proposals – Consultation Response

Recommendations

- 1.1 To write to the Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland outlining the Council's response as outlined in this report and request that the Commission:
 - 1.1.1 reviews its proposals in light of the significant changes in actual and forecast electorate data before it develops its final recommendations for submission to Scottish Ministers;
 - 1.1.2 reviews its proposals for ward boundaries as outlined in paragraph 3.8 of this report;
 - 1.1.3 changes the name of Ward 16 Liberton/Gilmerton to Gilmerton, if proposals are agreed; and
 - 1.1.4 notes City of Edinburgh Council's concerns that any slippage in the Review schedule could have significant impact on the implementation of changes to electoral arrangements for the Local Government election in May 2017.
- 1.2 To note that the next stage of the review is expected to commence in July 2015 and there will be consultation with the public on ward boundary proposals.

Background

- 2.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland (the Commission) commenced its Fifth Reviews of Local Government Electoral Arrangements (the Review) in February 2014 with publication of proposals for councillor numbers.
- 2.2 The Commission's proposal was to increase councillor numbers for the City of Edinburgh Council area from 58 to 63.
- 2.3 Council agreed its response to the Commission's proposal for the City of Edinburgh at its meeting on 25 March 2014 and the Chief Executive wrote to the Commission outlining the Council's response on 26 March 2014.
- 2.4 A 12 week public consultation period followed after which the Commission considered all responses received and agreed councillor numbers.

Main report

- 3.1 The Boundary Commission wrote to the Chief Executive on 19 March 2015 presenting an electoral arrangement for 63 councillors representing 5 3-member wards and 12 4-member wards, increasing councillor numbers for the area by 5.
- 3.2 The Commission has stated its proposals and objectives to:
 - 3.2.1 improve overall forecast parity;
 - 3.2.2 increase the number of councillors by 1 in each of wards 1, 2, 11, 14 and 17;
 - 3.2.3 address forecast disparities in wards 1 and 11;
 - 3.2.4 re-name ward 10 to Morningside but make no changes to other ward names;
 - 3.2.5 make changes to ward boundaries throughout the council area to reflect the change in councillor numbers and to align with “natural communities”.
- 3.3 Consultation with councils on the Commission’s proposals for ward boundaries closes on 19 May 2015 to be followed by a 12 week public consultation from July to October 2015. The Council proposes to respond to the Commission on the following key areas:
 - 3.3.1 electorate data;
 - 3.3.2 Polling District structure;
 - 3.3.3 Ward boundaries; and
 - 3.3.4 Timescales.

Electorate Data

- 3.4 The electorate data to support this review was taken from the electoral registers as at 1 September 2013. There was a surge in new electors being registered in the lead in to the Scottish Independence Referendum in September 2014. This growth in the electorate is not taken into account in the analysis of the Boundary Commission. The electorate of February 2015 suggests a total electorate in Edinburgh of 371,000, the forecast for 2019 used by the Commission is only 364,000.
- 3.5 Where any major revision to boundaries is considered it is most beneficial if this is based on accurate and recent electorate figures. In these particular circumstances it would be helpful if the Commission reviewed the current proposals in line with the significant changes in actual and forecast electoral data prior to development and submission of final proposals to Scottish Ministers.

Polling District Structure

- 3.6 The Council is required to subdivide each ward into polling districts with a polling place identified for each district. It is not clear that the revised ward proposals take account of the subdivision into polling districts. Administering an electoral event under new boundaries would be facilitated if existing districts were maintained as the basic building blocks, allowing current polling places to be retained, within revised ward boundaries. The identification of and access to polling places is becoming increasingly challenging and this would be very helpful in ensuring the provision of high quality accessible polling places for the voter.

Ward Boundary Changes

- 3.7 Revisions to the Ward boundaries may affect logistical arrangements for the delivery of electoral events within the city. For example, there may be implications for the location and provision of polling places. The Elections team have reviewed the proposals to assess what impact they would have on electoral administration. The Council's concern is to ensure that arrangements are being made in the interest of the voters to facilitate and support participation in the democratic process.
- 3.8 An analysis of the material has identified a number of areas of concern or where further consideration might be helpful. In particular, the following proposals, which will impact significantly on polling place arrangements:

3.8.1 Ward 2: Spylaw and Clovenstone;

3.8.2 Ward 4: Western Harbour;

3.8.3 Ward 14/17: North Cairntow; and

3.8.4 Ward 15/14: Forckenford.

Ward Names

- 3.9 The Commission has proposed changing the name of Ward 10 from Meadows/Morningside to Morningside following the removal of the Meadows to Ward 11 City Centre.
- 3.10 The Commission has proposed moving Liberton from Ward 16 Liberton/Gilmerton to Ward 15 Southside/Newington. For consistency it is suggested that the name of Ward 16 could also be adjusted to Gilmerton if this proposal is agreed.

Timescale

- 3.11 The Commission's timetable for the Review is driven by the requirement to report to Scottish Ministers for approval before the Scottish Parliament Election in May 2016.
- 3.12 There is concern that, should the timetable slip and this essential deadline be missed, there will not be enough time to implement the changes required to introduce new electoral arrangements in time for the Local Government Election in May 2017.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Not applicable.

Financial impact

- 5.1 Potential increase in costs to support additional councillors.
- 5.2 Additional costs associated with reviewing and changing polling places following changes to ward boundaries.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There are risks for the Council if the Review timetable slips and there is insufficient time to implement the required changes.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Changes to ward boundaries could disadvantage some sections of communities if changes to polling places impact their ability to cast their vote.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 There is no direct sustainability impact as a result of the report.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 The Returning Officer has been consulted on electoral implications of the proposals.
- 9.2 Political groups have been consulted and feedback provided by Group Leaders.

9.3 Political groups will be able to respond directly through the public consultation process in line with their political party arrangements.

Background reading/external references

[Item 7.4 - Boundary Commission for Scotland - Publication of Proposals for Councillor Numbers - Proposed Consultation Response](#)

Alastair Maclean

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Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes

Single Outcome Agreement

Appendices

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland, Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements, City of Edinburgh Council Area, Proposals for wards – March 2015

Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland

Fifth Reviews of Electoral Arrangements

City of Edinburgh Council Area
Proposals for wards



March 2015

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Membership of the Commission

Chairman: Mr Ronnie Hinds
Deputy Chairman: Mr William Magee
Commissioners: Mr Roland Bean
Prof. Ailsa Henderson
Dr Susan Walker

Secretary to the Commission: Dr Hugh Buchanan (to October 2014)
Ms Isabel Drummond-Murray (from October 2014)

Contents

Introduction	1
The reviews	1
Our proposals for wards in Scotland	2
Consultation on our proposals for wards	2
Proposals for wards in City of Edinburgh council area	4

Introduction

1. The Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland is an independent, non-political body whose purpose is to make recommendations for local government administrative and electoral boundaries in Scotland.
2. We are tasked by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to undertake reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland. These reviews are our fifth periodic reviews of local government electoral arrangements in Scotland since we were first established in 1973. We intend to submit a report containing our recommendations for electoral arrangements for each council area in Scotland to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016, in time for implementation for the next local government elections in May 2017.
3. This booklet contains a summary of our proposals for Scotland as a whole and our proposals for wards in City of Edinburgh council area, and information on how to participate in our consultation with councils from 19 March to 19 May 2015.

The reviews

4. In 2011 we consulted the public on our methodology for determining councillor numbers. The results of that consultation can be found on our website www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk
5. We formally began the current reviews on 21 February 2014. We consulted councils and the public on our proposals for councillor numbers for each council between February 2014 and August 2014. We have now considered all the submissions received during these consultations. We have reached a decision on councillor numbers and the associated ward designs and are now presenting our proposals for wards for further consultation. The meeting papers that informed our deliberations and the minutes of our meetings are referenced on page 4. Details of how to participate in the consultation are given below.
6. For each electoral ward, we make recommendations about its boundary, its name and the number of councillors to represent the ward (legislation restricts this to either 3 or 4 councillors).
7. When reviewing electoral arrangements the legislation requires us to take account of the following factors:
 - the interests of effective and convenient local government;
 - within each council, that each councillor should represent the same number of electors as nearly as may be;
 - local ties which would be broken by making a particular boundary;
 - the desirability of fixing boundaries that are easily identifiable; and
 - special geographical considerations.
8. For further information on the policies and procedures we have adopted to underpin these reviews and the legal requirements for ward design, please refer to our *Guidance Booklet*, which is available on our website http://www.lgbc-scotland.gov.uk/reviews/5th_electoral/resources.asp or on request.

Our proposals for wards in Scotland

9. We developed our proposals using electorate data from 1 September 2013. The number of electors registered in each council electoral ward on that date can be found on our website. In developing our proposals for wards, we have had regard to the likely changes in the number of electors by considering forecast electorate counts in 2019. The methodology we have used to forecast electorates can be found on our website. Whilst the dataset does not include 16 and 17 year olds, we have considered the impact their inclusion on the electoral register would have and are content that this would not affect our proposals.
10. Our proposals use population size to set councillor numbers. In keeping with past reviews we have created categories of similar councils to set ratios of councillors to electors. In doing so, we have used population distribution and levels of deprivation to group councils together. Population size, however, remains the biggest determinant of councillor numbers and the design of wards.
11. We consulted on proposals for councillor numbers in 2014. In 5 council areas, we have changed the number of councillors proposed for the area from our original proposals for councillor numbers because it allows us to take better account of the factors in the legislation during ward design. Overall, our proposals provide for 1,217 councillors representing 351 wards in Scotland: a decrease of 6 councillors and 2 wards from existing electoral arrangements.
12. Our proposals for wards include unchanged electoral arrangements in 2 council areas and minor changes in 2 other council areas.
13. Nationally, over 96% of proposed wards are forecast to be within 10% of parity for the council area. At present 17% of existing wards are 10% or more from parity. Only 2 proposed wards are forecast to be more than 15% from parity, compared to 19 existing wards.
14. Our proposals improve parity between councillors in terms of the number of electors they represent (the forecast average variation from a council area's parity per councillor improves from 6.0% for existing wards to 4.6% for proposed wards).
15. In general we have sought to construct wards from complete local sub-geographies such as community council areas. In our proposals for wards almost 80% of community council areas are wholly within wards. In a few council areas, we have adopted ward designs that recognise other locally-significant boundaries such as community planning areas, neighbourhoods or natural communities.

Consultation on our proposals for wards

16. The legislation provides that we must first of all consult on our proposals with councils. This consultation on our proposals for wards runs from 19 March 2015 until 19 May 2015. After consideration of responses to this consultation with councils, we intend to conduct a 12-week public consultation on our proposals for wards between July and October 2015. Depending on the outcome of the consultation, we may further develop and consult on our proposals later in 2015. We expect to submit our reports containing our final recommendations to the Scottish Ministers by May 2016.
17. Further copies of this booklet are available on request.

18. We welcome all comments on our proposals to help inform our deliberations. Comments can be made in the following ways:

in writing to:	Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland Thistle House 91 Haymarket Terrace Edinburgh EH12 5HD
by email to:	comments@scottishboundaries.gov.uk

19. All comments we receive in response to this consultation will be available to view on our website in due course. For further information, please visit our website.
20. Where comments contain objections to our proposals, it would be helpful if they could be accompanied by alternative proposals that take account of statutory requirements and consider the consequences on the council area as a whole.

Proposals for wards in City of Edinburgh council area

21. The maps on the following pages illustrate our proposals for wards in City of Edinburgh council area. We present an electoral arrangement for 63 councillors representing 5 3-member wards and 12 4-member wards, increasing councillor numbers in the area by 5.

22. Our proposals for the council area:

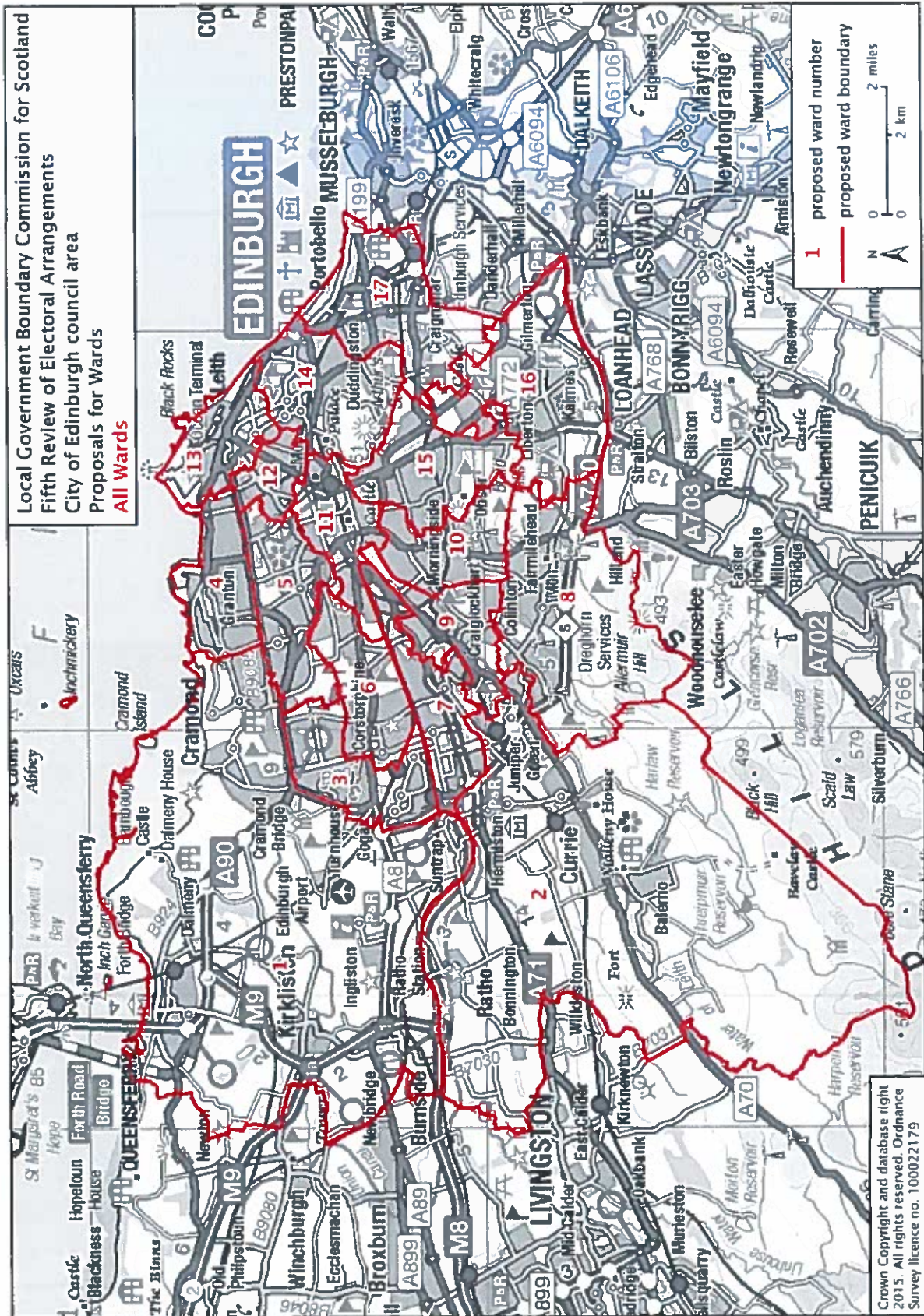
- improve overall forecast parity;
- increase the number of councillors by 1 in each of wards 1, 2, 11, 14 and 17;
- address forecast disparities in wards 1 and 11;
- re-name ward 10 to *Morningside* but make no changes to other ward names; and
- make changes to ward boundaries throughout the council area to reflect the change in councillor numbers and to align with "natural communities" (a local geography used by City of Edinburgh Council).

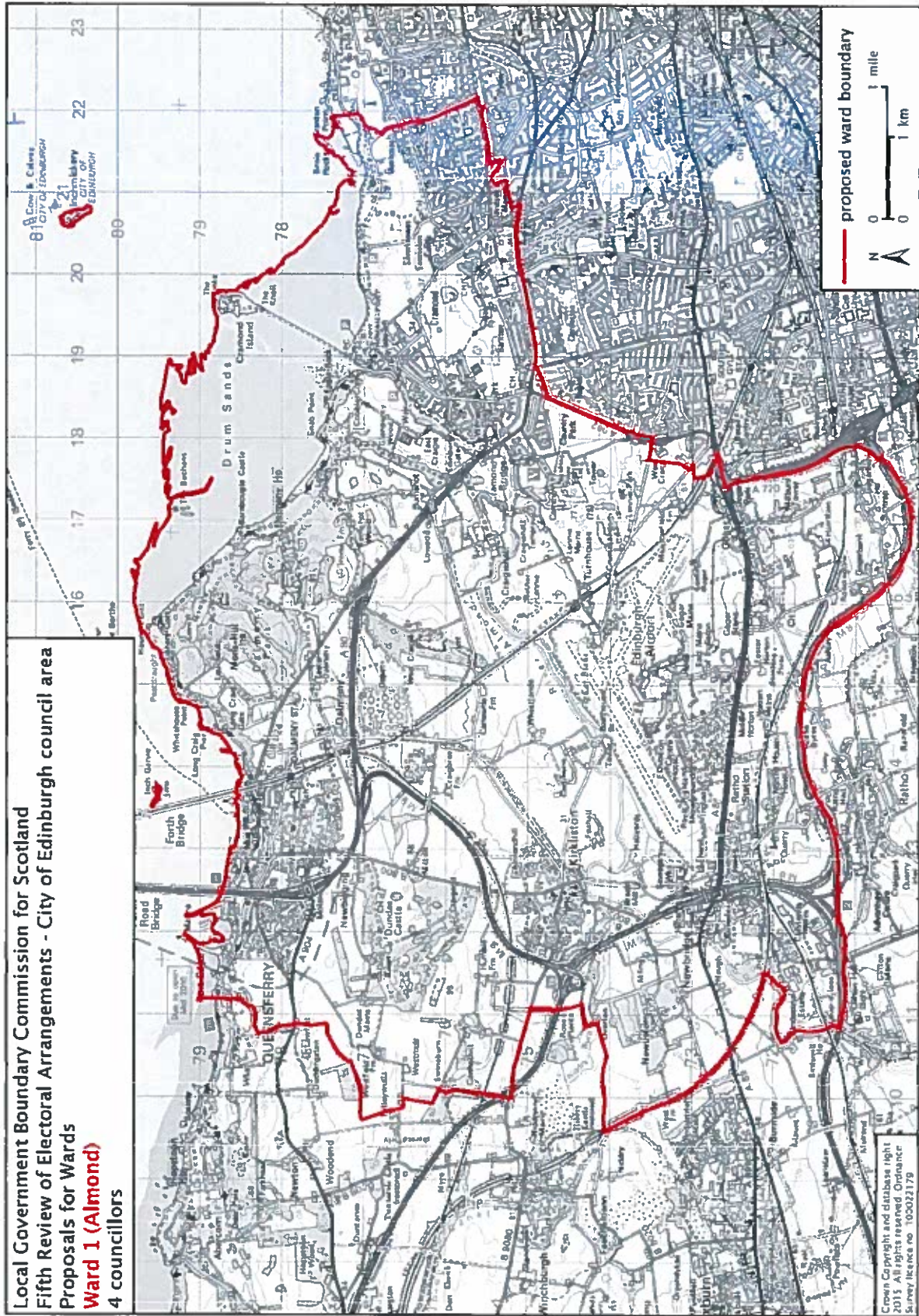
23. We discussed the proposals for City of Edinburgh council area at our meeting of 13 January 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2265/15). We decided on our proposals at our meetings of 3 February 2015 and 3 March 2015 (see LGBCS Paper 2276/15).

24. Table 1 below details the electorates and associated variation from parity of the proposed wards:

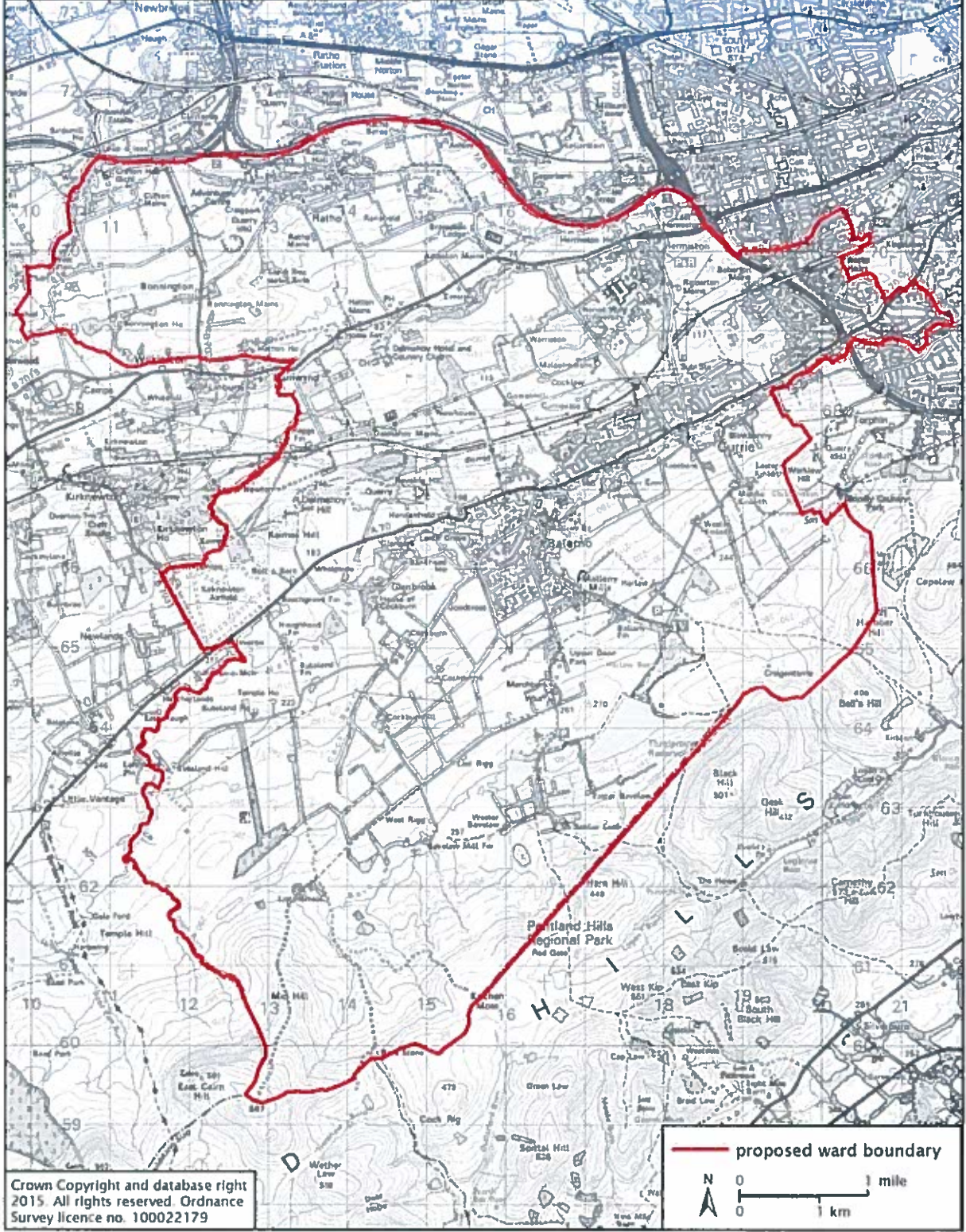
ward no.	ward name	cllrs	electorate Sept 13	actual variation from parity	forecast electorate 2019	forecast variation from parity
1	Almond	4	22,758	4%	25,109	9%
2	Pentland Hills	4	20,931	-5%	22,054	-5%
3	Drum Brae / Gyle	3	17,159	4%	17,794	3%
4	Forth	4	21,210	-3%	22,736	-2%
5	Inverleith	4	23,242	6%	23,791	3%
6	Corstorphine / Murrayfield	3	17,316	5%	17,515	1%
7	Sighthill / Gorgie	4	21,555	-2%	22,590	-2%
8	Colinton / Fairmilehead	3	17,883	9%	18,476	6%
9	Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart	3	16,243	-1%	17,693	2%
10	Morningside	4	22,239	1%	22,627	-2%
11	City Centre	4	19,571	-11%	21,817	-6%
12	Leith Walk	4	23,205	6%	24,799	7%
13	Leith	3	15,557	-5%	16,472	-5%
14	Craigtinny / Duddingston	4	21,242	-3%	21,751	-6%
15	Southside / Newington	4	23,831	9%	24,787	7%
16	Liberton / Gilmerton	4	21,520	-2%	23,099	0%
17	Portobello / Craigmillar	4	19,939	-9%	21,325	-8%
Totals		63	345,401	5%	364,435	4%

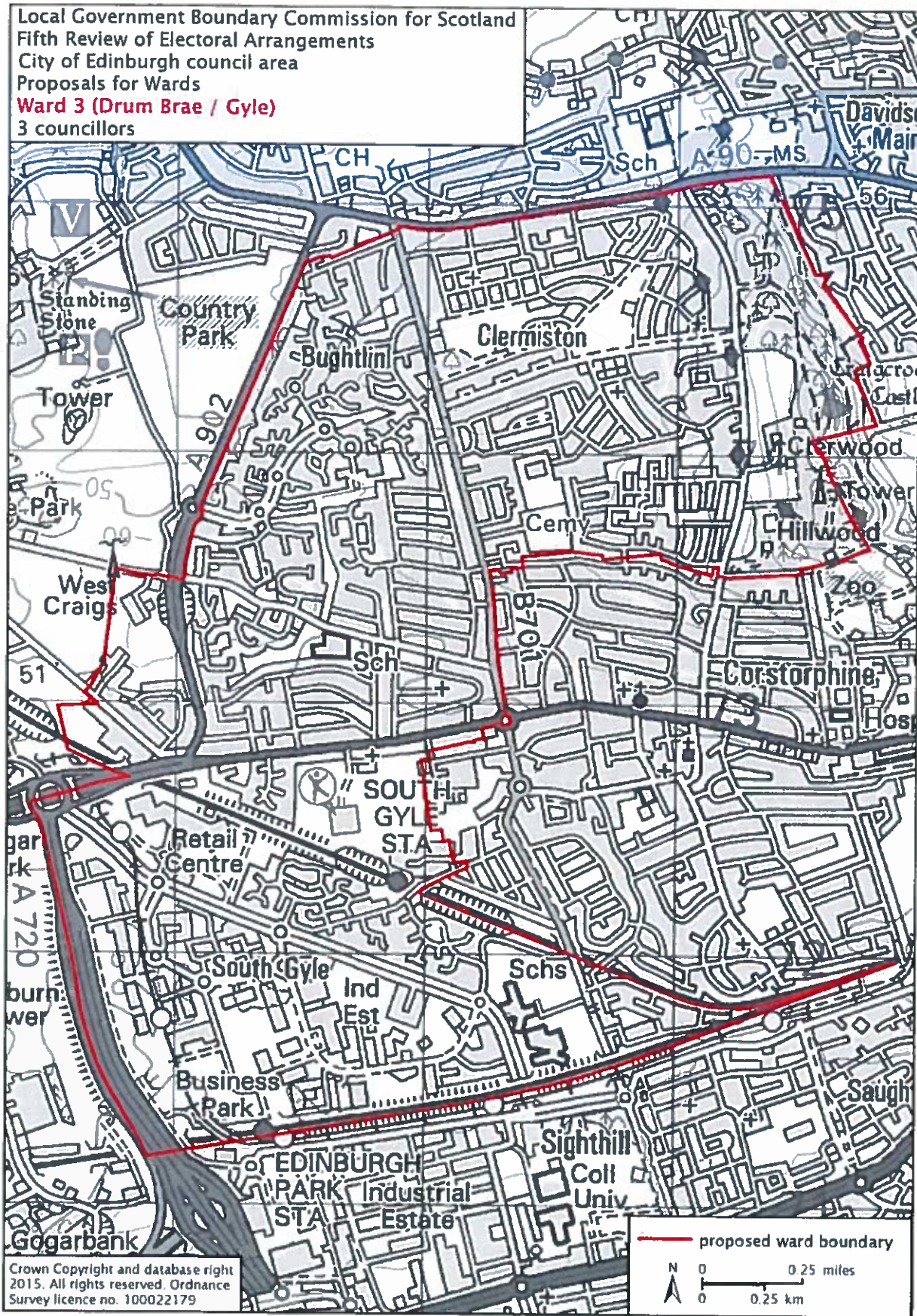
Table 1 - proposed wards' electorate counts.

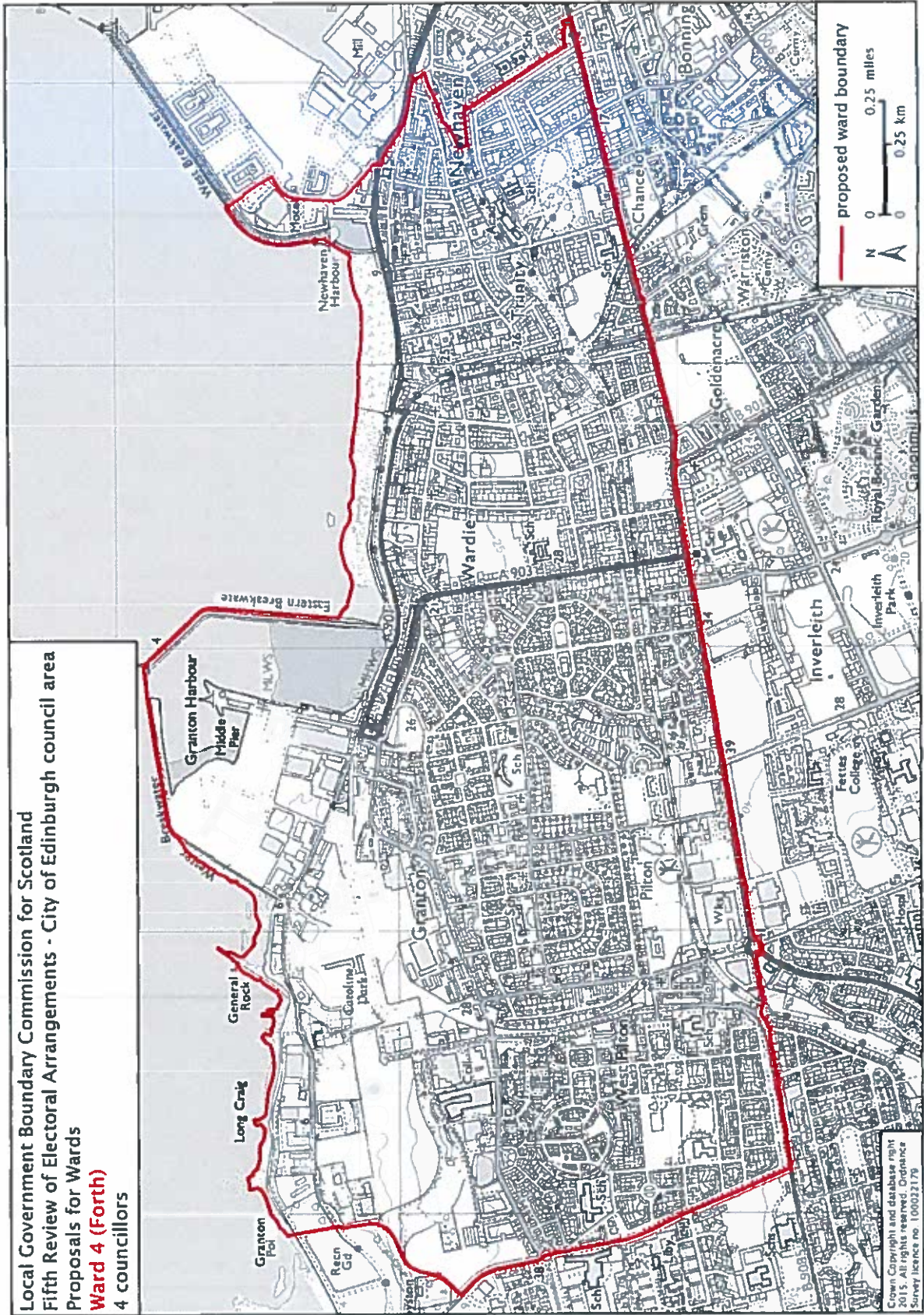


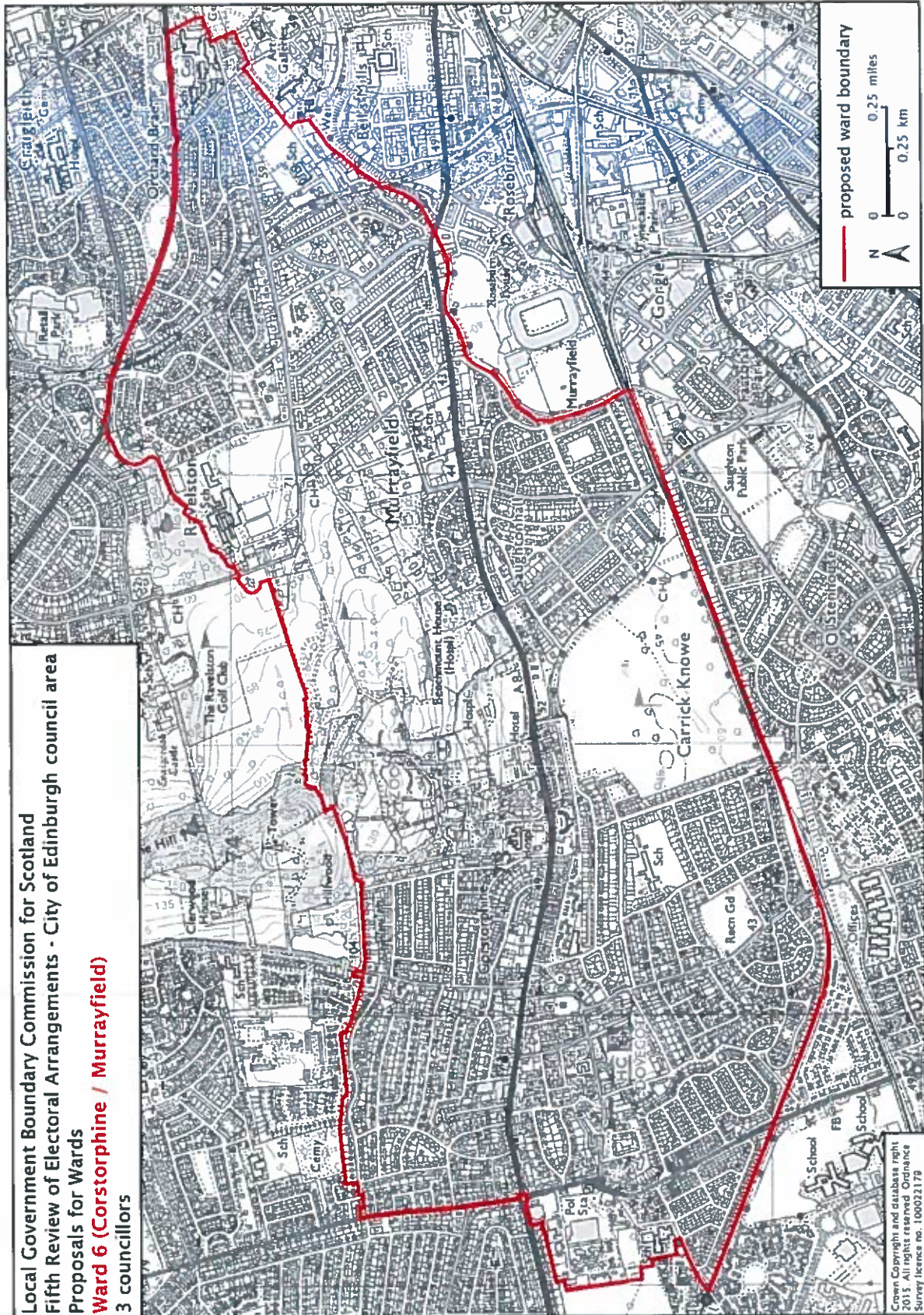


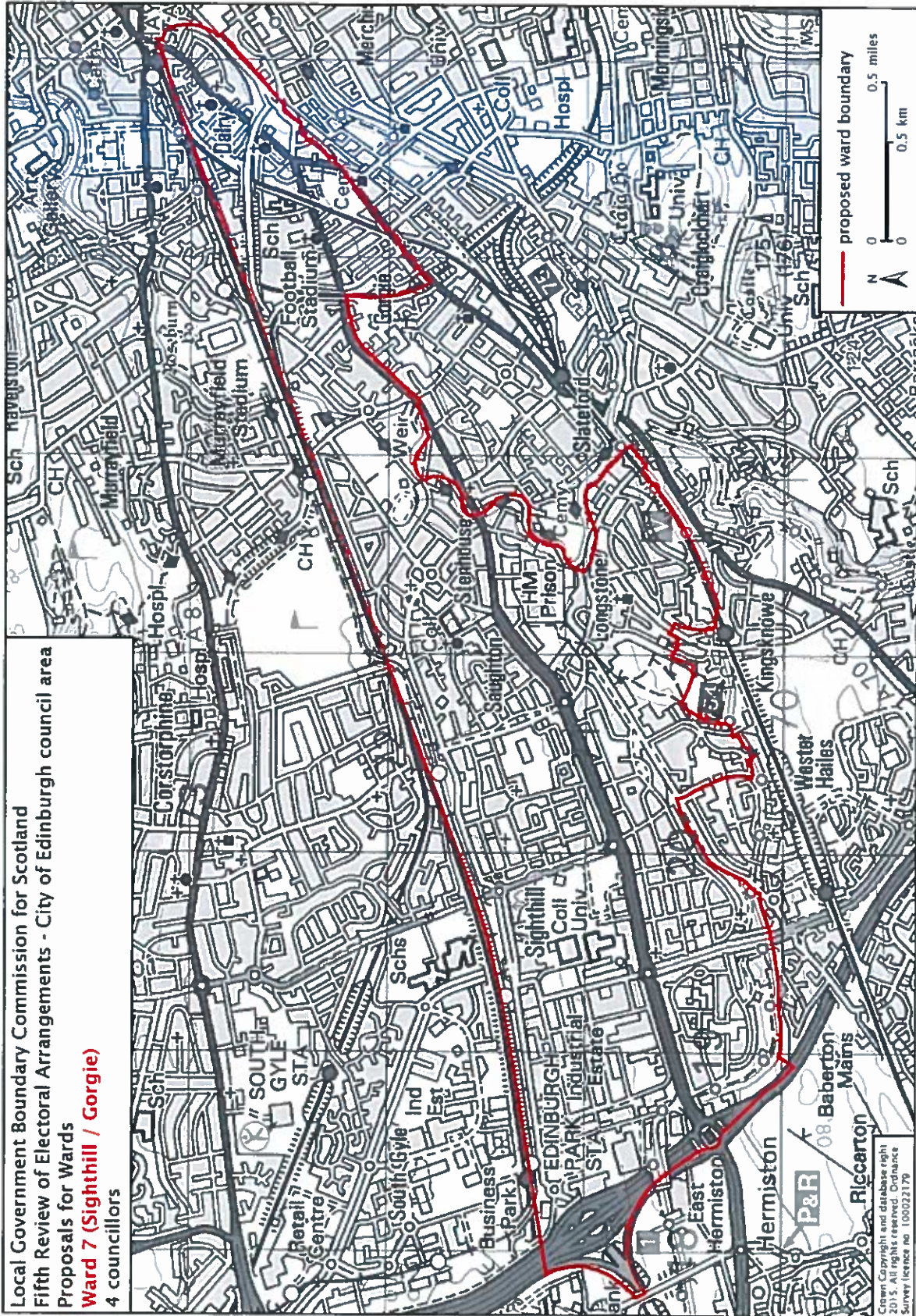
Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
City of Edinburgh council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 2 (Pentland Hills)
4 councillors

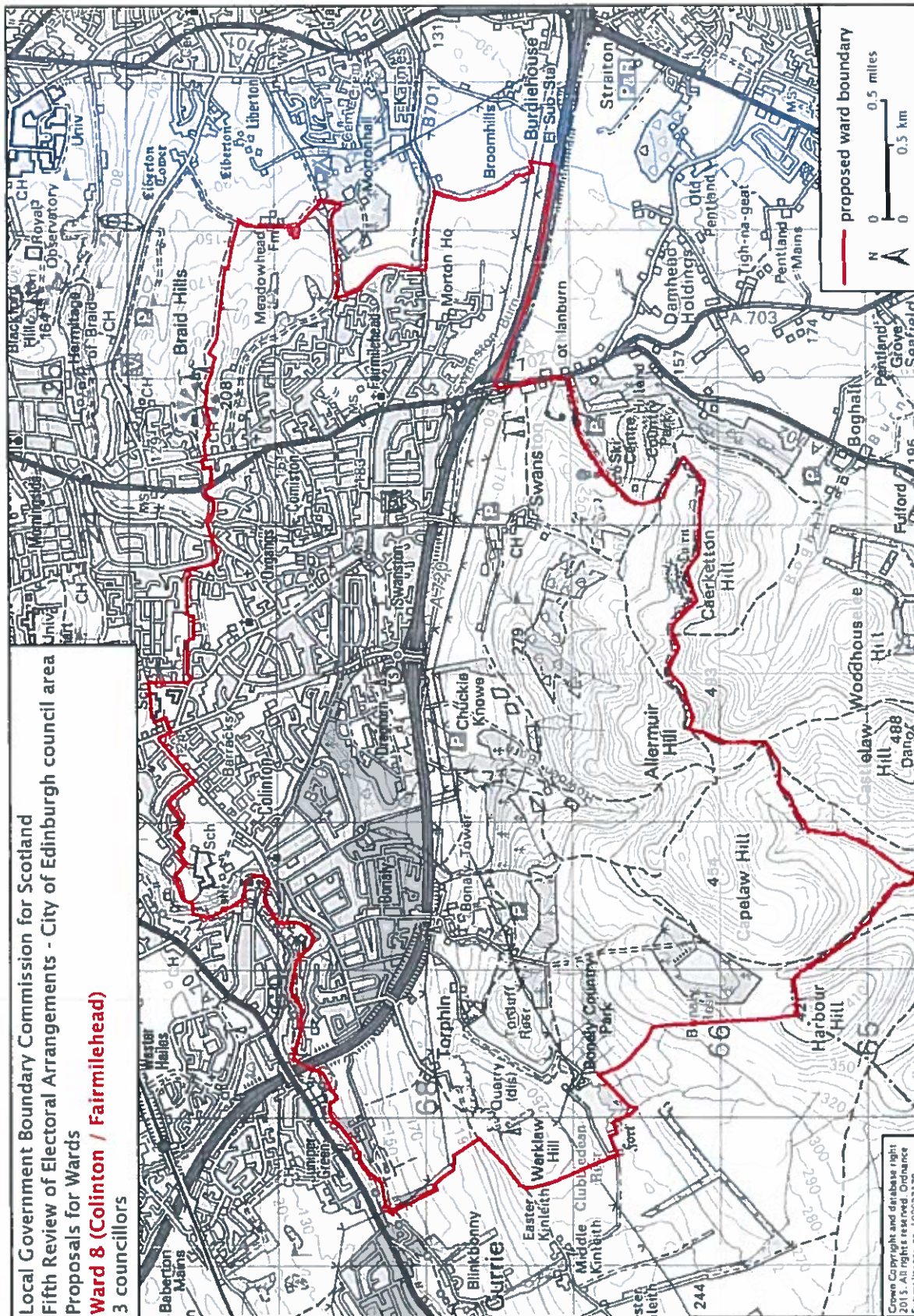


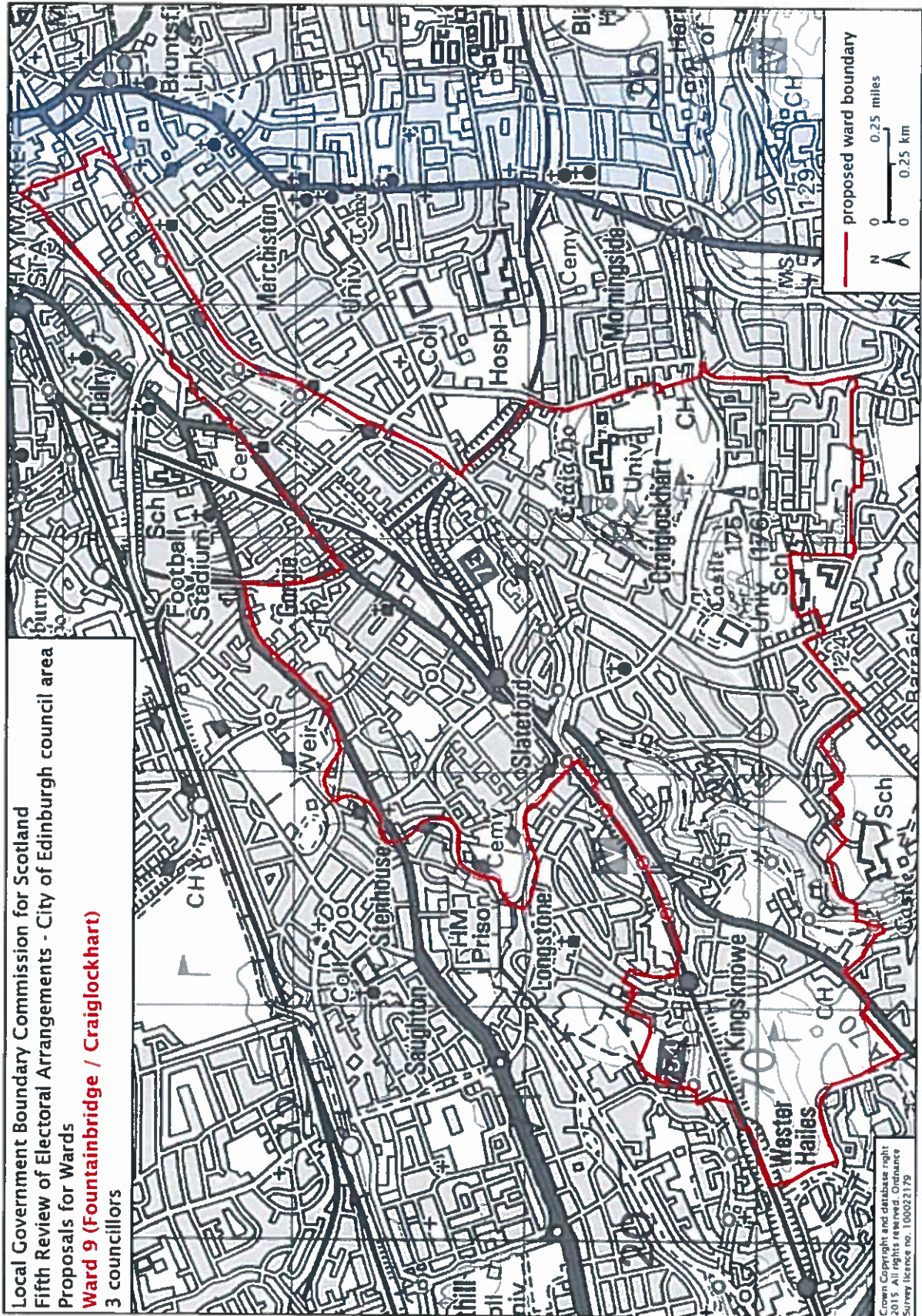




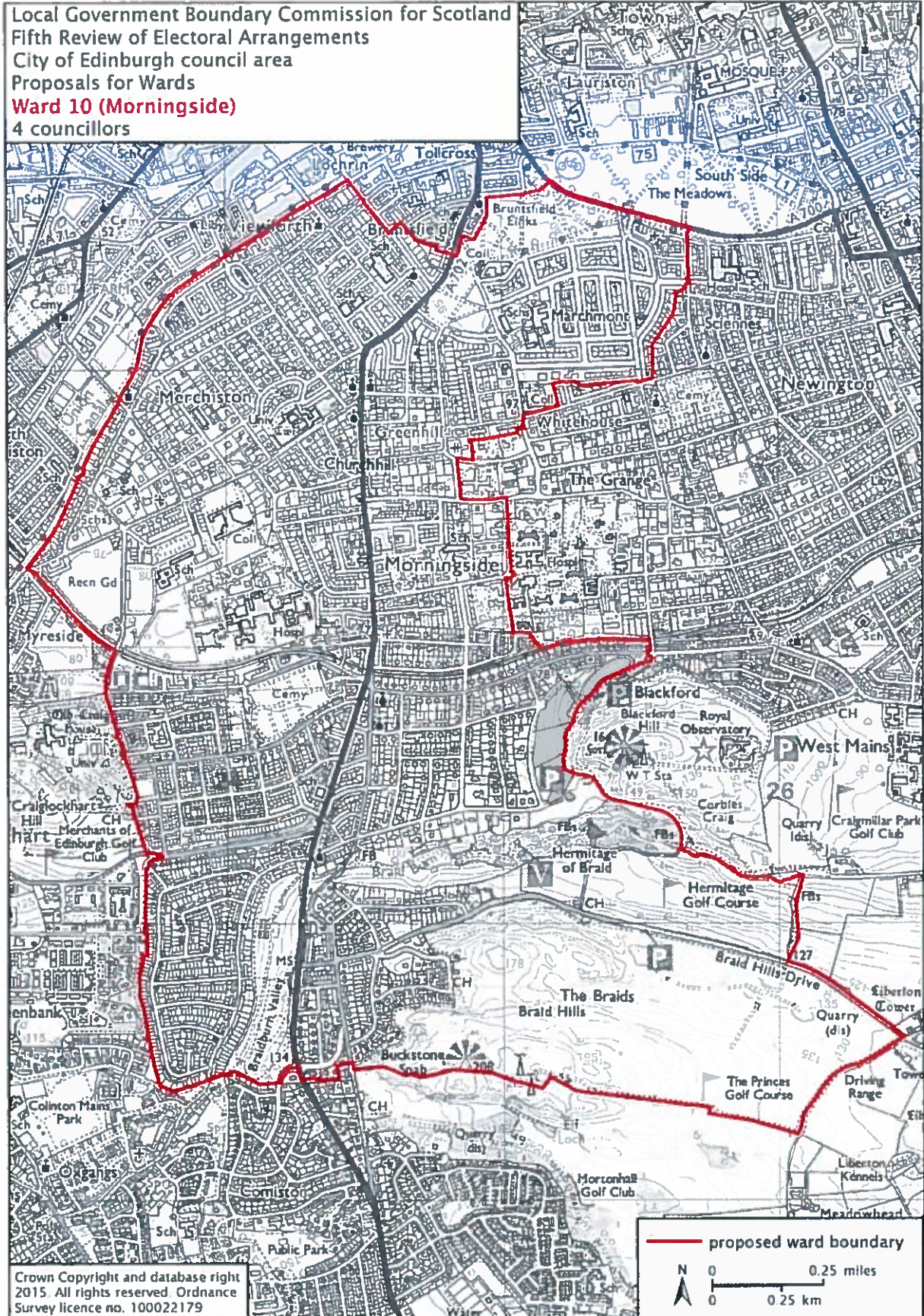


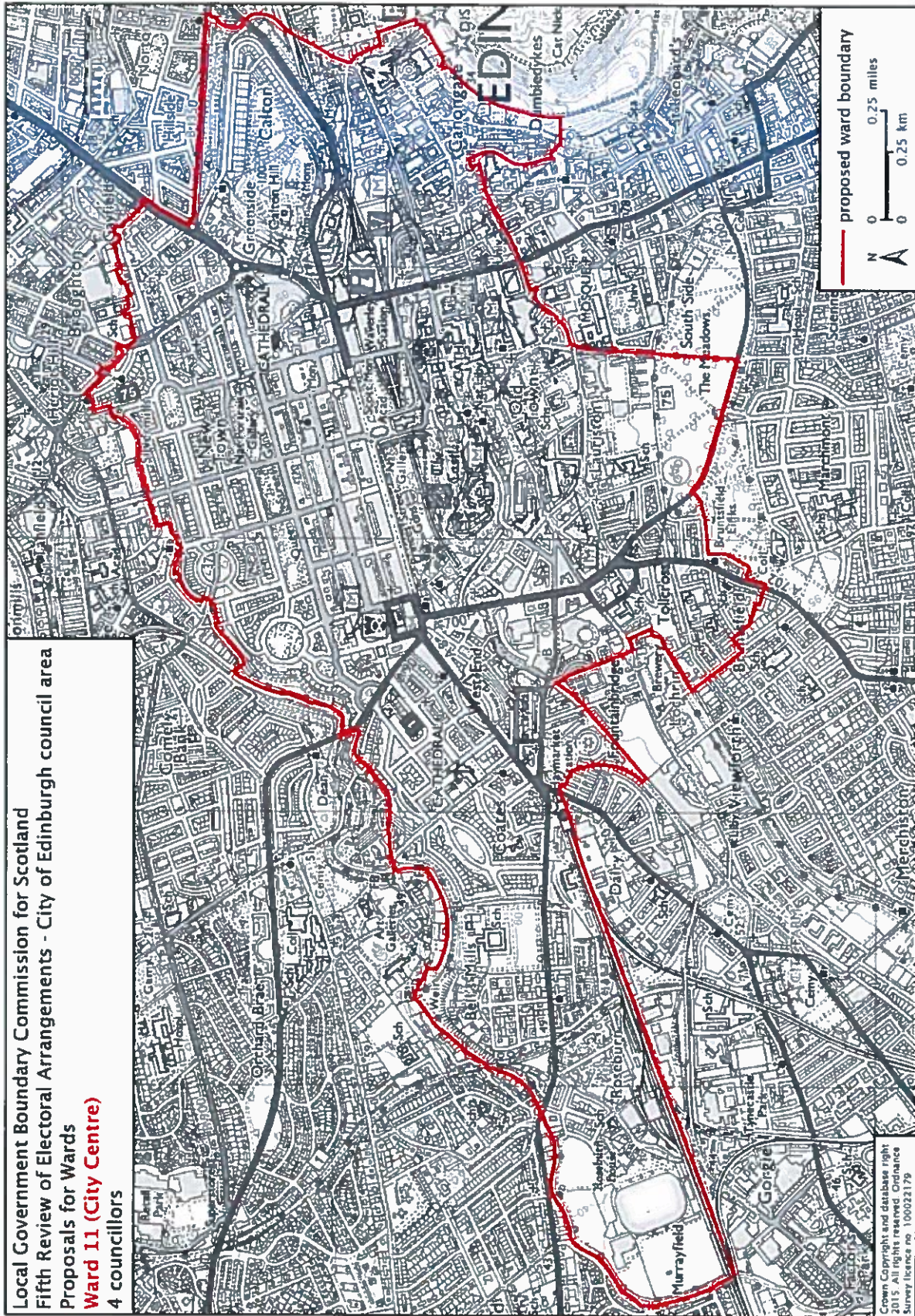


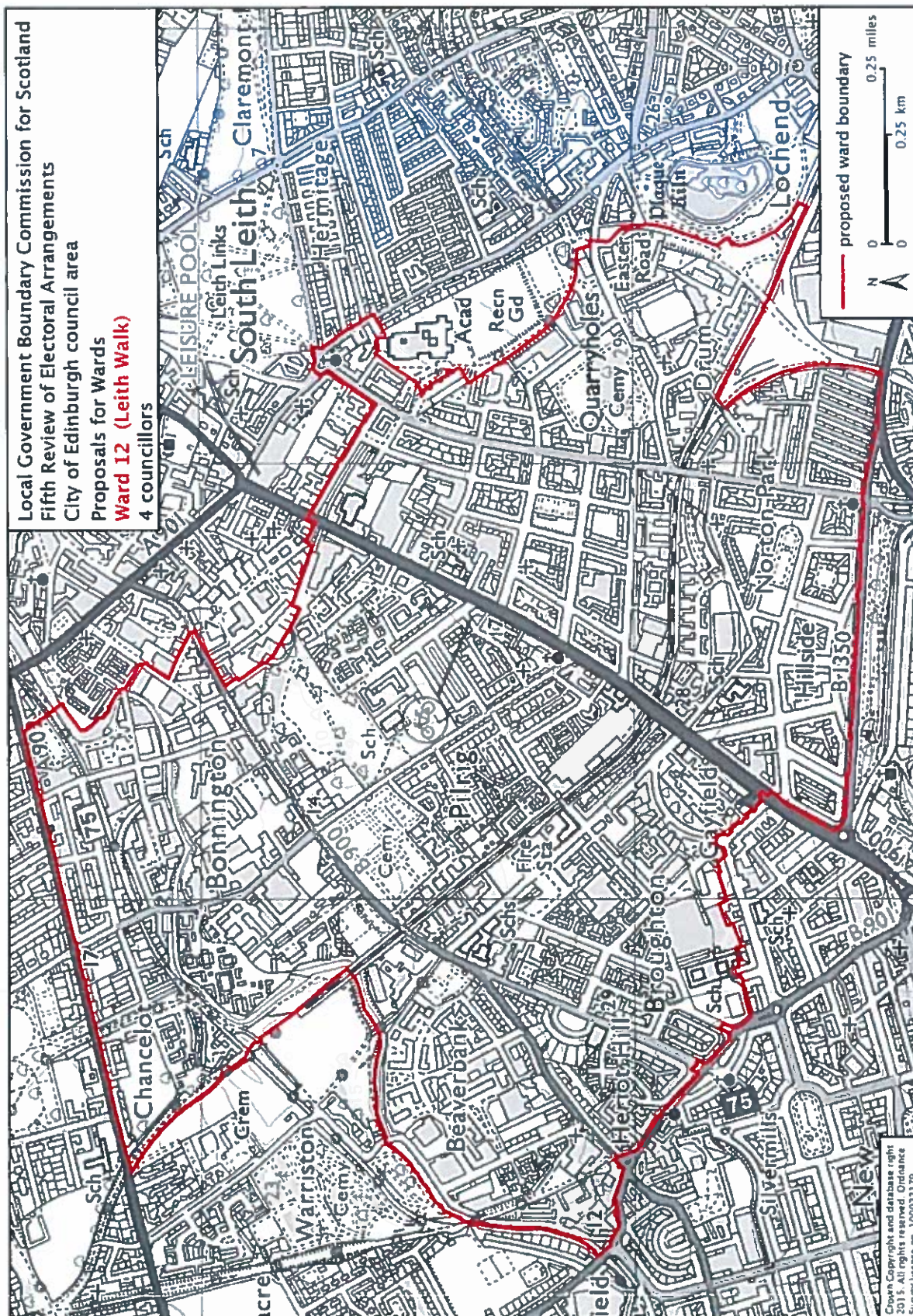


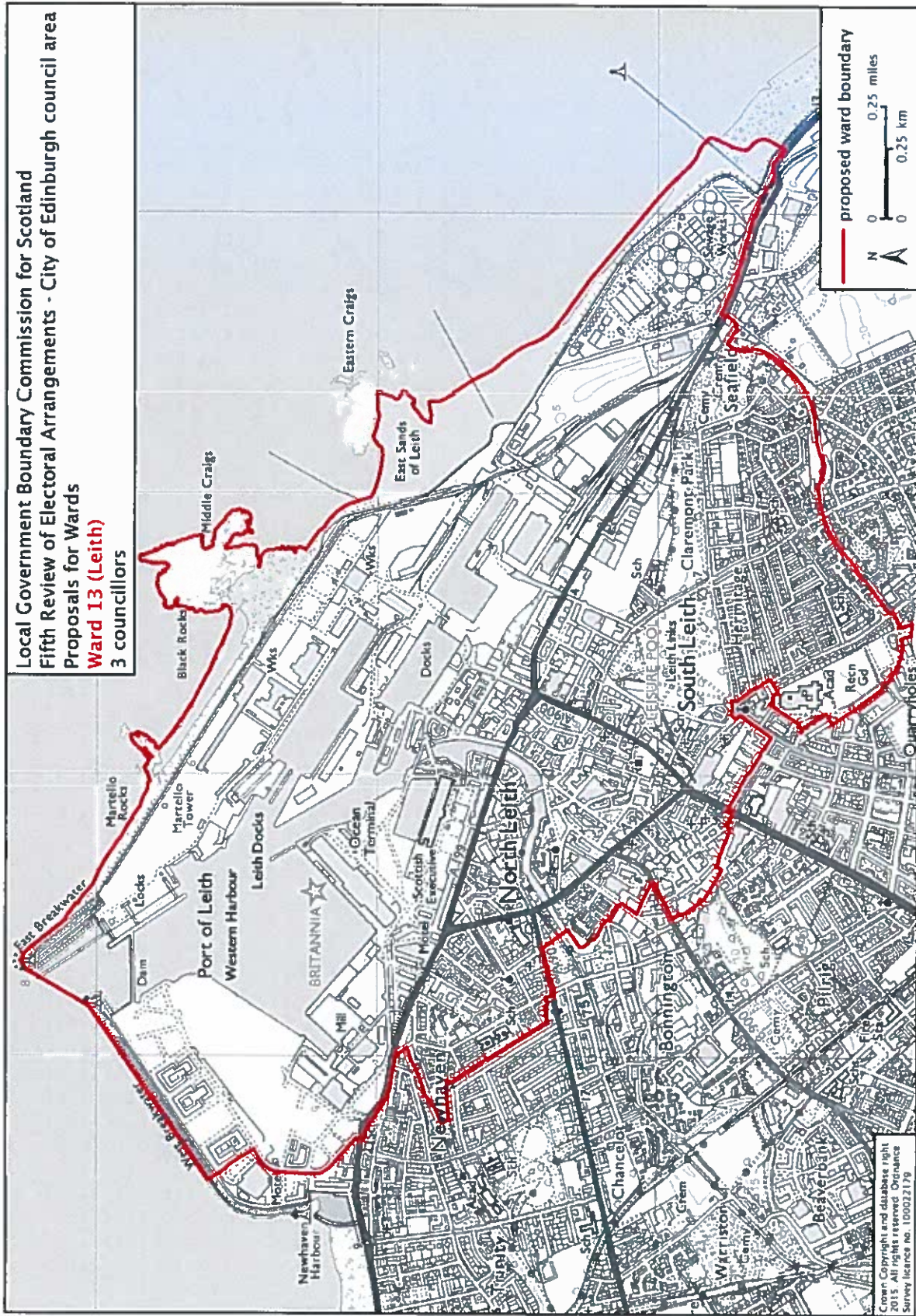


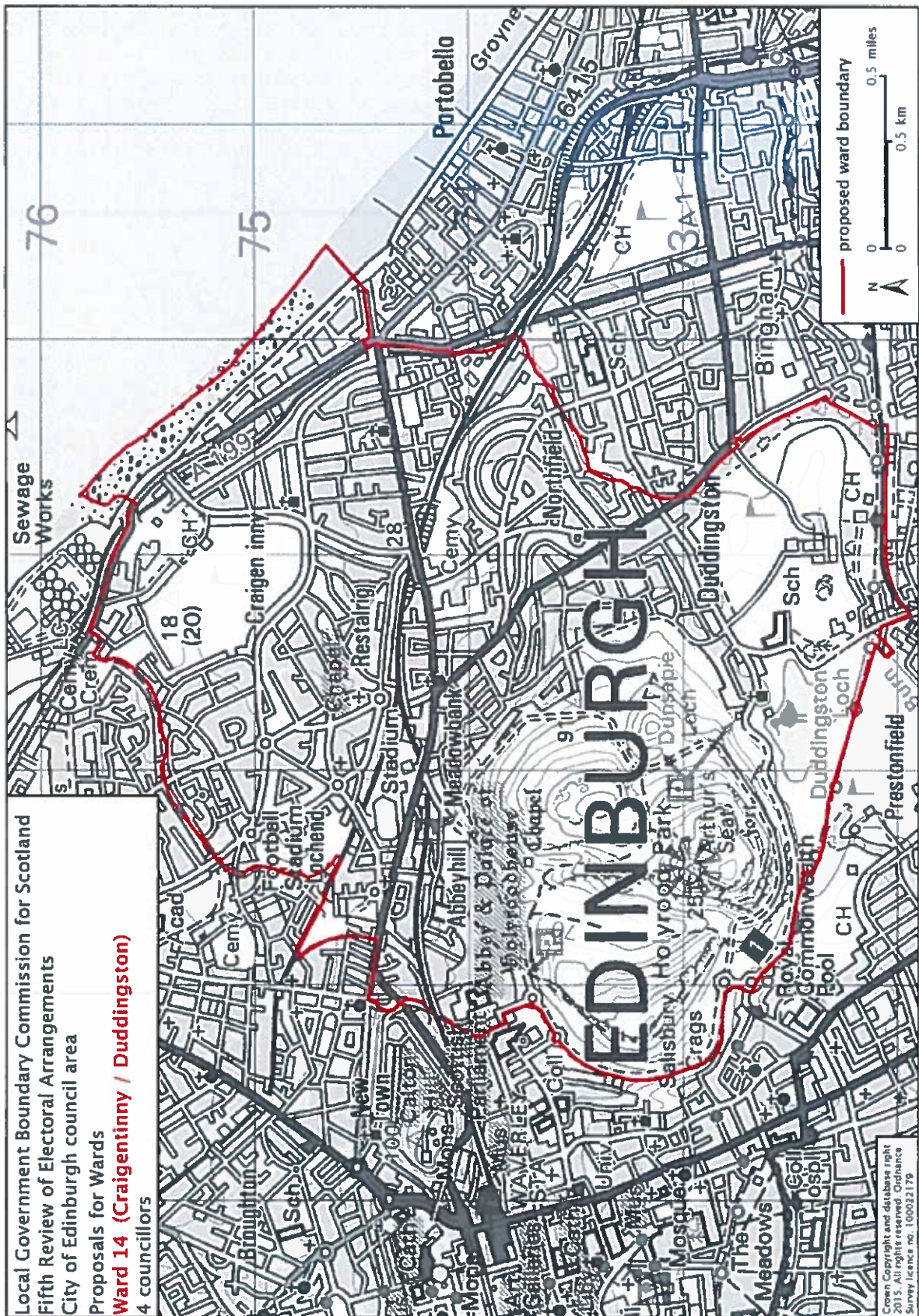
Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
City of Edinburgh council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 10 (Morningside)
4 councillors





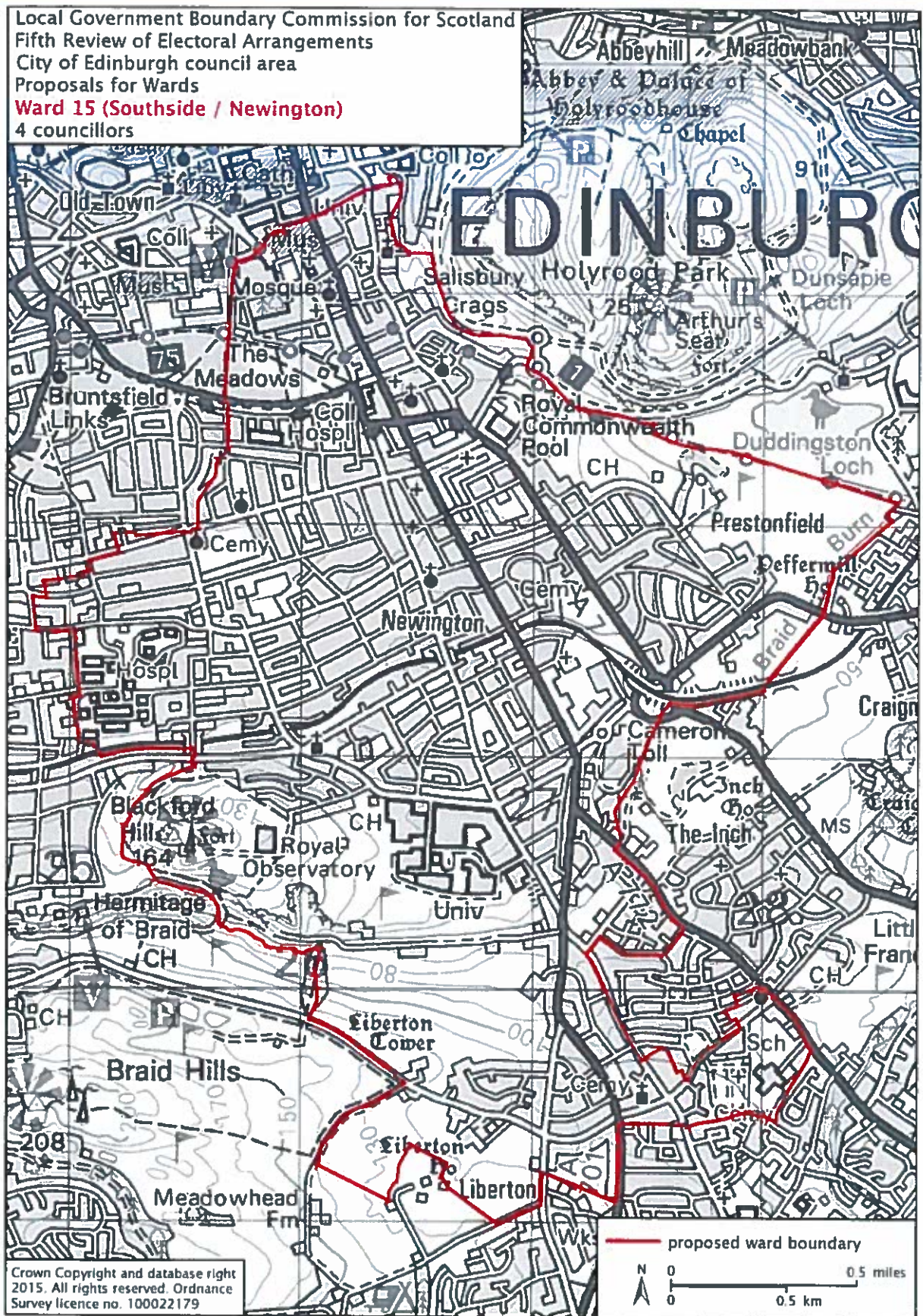


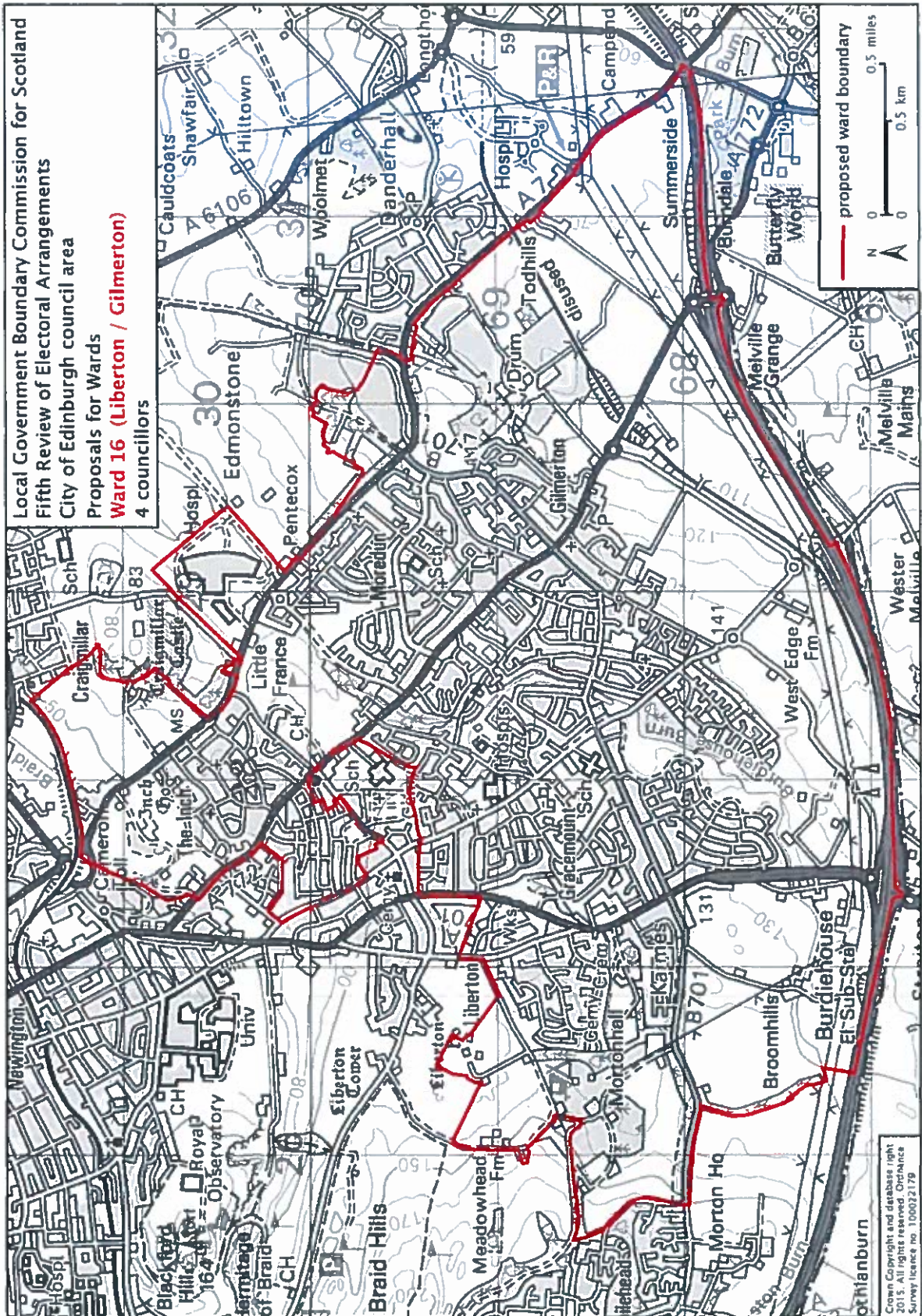




Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
City of Edinburgh council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 14 (Craigentinny / Duddingston)
4 councillors

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Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland
Fifth Review of Electoral Arrangements
City of Edinburgh council area
Proposals for Wards
Ward 17 (Portobello / Craigmillar)
4 councillors

