



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

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www.cherwell.gov.uk

16 January 2017

Dear Resident

Possible split of Upper Heyford Parish into two new Parishes – please tell us what you think

Upper Heyford Parish Council has asked Cherwell District Council to consider dividing the parish to create two new parishes. We are therefore writing to every household in the parish, to explain what we have been asked to consider and to get the views of residents.

What would this split mean?

Essentially a split would create two parishes. Where a parish is created with between 150 and 1000 electors, a decision has to be made as to whether a parish council is formed.

If a new parish council is formed, in order to be able to carry out its functions the new Parish Council would have the power to decide whether or not to levy a precept.

What are Parish Councils?

Parish councils make local decisions and introduce policy that is relevant to the public interest of the parish. This is done at meetings of the Parish council, by parish councillors who are elected to serve for a four year term. Parish councillors are unpaid. Upper Heyford Parish Council has six parish councillors. If the Parish is split into two, each Parish Council would have its own Parish Councillors (numbers to be determined)

Parish councils represent the local community, for example, by providing responses to planning or licensing consultations, they also deliver services to meet local needs and improve the quality of life and community well-being. Parish councils have powers to provide and maintain a variety of important local services, such as allotments, burial grounds, bus shelters, open spaces and village halls.

Parish councils are funded by a "precept" which forms part of the council tax residents pay. Cherwell District Council collects the precept on behalf of Upper Heyford Parish Council and gives this money to the Parish Council who use it to support its operations and carry out local projects. The precept that each household pays depends on which Band of Council Tax you fall into. For a Band D property the amount paid in 2016/2017 was £44.37 for the year. The Parish Council review this amount every year.

Where would the parish be split?

The map on page 4 shows the current parish boundary. Upper Heyford Parish Council has suggested that the new boundary could be along the length of the Kirtlington Road/Portway bridleway, as shown on the map on page 5. When a new boundary is considered, it needs to be something physical that is easy to identify, such as a road, hedge or a river for example.

As well as deciding where the boundary between the two parishes should be created, the boundary with the existing parishes of Somerton and Ardley with Fewcott also needs to be considered. At the moment these boundaries run through the middle of the old airfield. Consideration should be given to whether there is a better place to put them, so that they follow real boundaries rather than historic field boundaries which were destroyed when the base was created. The map on page 6 shows where the edge of the airfield is, and where the boundary could be moved to. We are also speaking to Somerton Parish Council and Ardley with Fewcott Parish Council about the position of the boundary.

Please let us know which of the options you prefer

Will the amount of Council Tax I pay change?

It might do. If the split goes ahead, both parish councils will need to decide how much money they need to raise via their precepts, collected as part of your Council Tax bill, to help run their respective parishes. Therefore, whichever parish you live in, your Council Tax bill could go up or down.

Upper Heyford Parish Council currently spends the majority of its precept in the village and not in Heyford Park, as historically the park has been provided with facilities by the airbase and now the developer. Currently, Upper Heyford Parish Council can spread its running costs across the whole parish. However should there be a separation into two parishes, there would be fewer properties to meet these costs, therefore the parish council will either have to increase its precept, reduce its running costs or its level of service provision.

What would the name of the parishes be?

If two new parishes were created, consideration would also need to be given to the names of these parishes. It is not possible for both parishes to be called Upper Heyford, as this would cause confusion for residents as well as Royal Mail, utility companies, delivery companies and the emergency services.

So far the following suggestions have been made;

The village could be called Heyford Warren, due to historic links with the de la Warrenne family, and the park could be called Upper Heyford, due to it physically being higher.

Alternatively, the village could remain Upper Heyford, and the park could be called Heyford Leys or Heyford Park.

Please let us know if you have any other suggestions.

It is possible that your postal address could change slightly to reflect the names of the parishes, but there would be no change to postcodes.

What else could change?

If two new parishes were created, it would be necessary for Cherwell District Council to find a new building to be used as a polling station in the park area of the parish. This would facilitate the running of elections.

History of Upper Heyford Parish

Upper Heyford Parish is made up of two areas, known locally as the village and the park.

The village has around 170 houses, as well as allotments, a sports ground, village hall and children's play area. There is also a church, St Mary's, which dates back to AD 1074.

The park is the area that was previously RAF Upper Heyford. After World War II, the site was leased to the US Air Force until 1994. It is now owned by the Dorchester Group, who have been developing the site and building new houses.

What happens now?

Cherwell District Council is consulting every household in Upper Heyford to ensure that everybody in the parish has an opportunity to give their views on the suggestion put forward by the Parish Council.

On page 7 you will find a reply slip. Please take a few minutes to fill this in and return it using the envelope supplied. You don't need to use a stamp as Cherwell District Council will pay the postage.

Alternatively, you can send an email to democracy@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk or visit our webpage www.cherwell.gov.uk/communitygovernance and click on the survey monkey link to reply electronically.

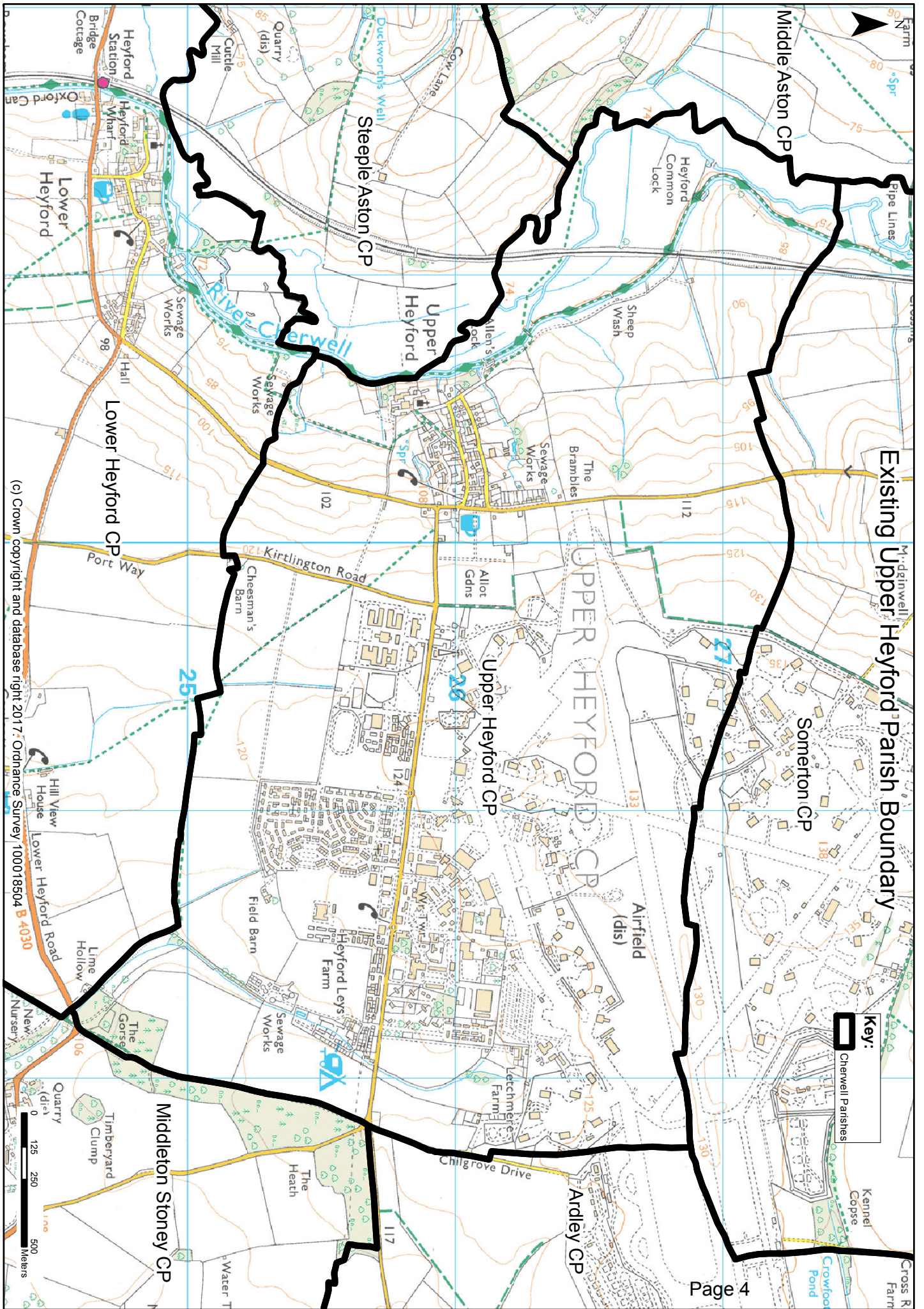
All written or emailed responses should reach us by **Friday 17 March 2017** to be taken into consideration. The online survey will close at 11:59pm on the same date.

Responses will be considered by a working group of District Councillors, who will come up with a set of recommendations to be considered by full Council in May 2017. There will then be a second consultation on proposals for the area.

As well as this consultation document, we will be attending events in the parish to answer any questions residents have:

Wednesday 25 January – Upper Heyford Residents Association meeting

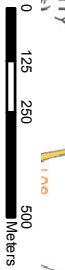
Thursday 9 February – Upper Heyford Parish Council meeting



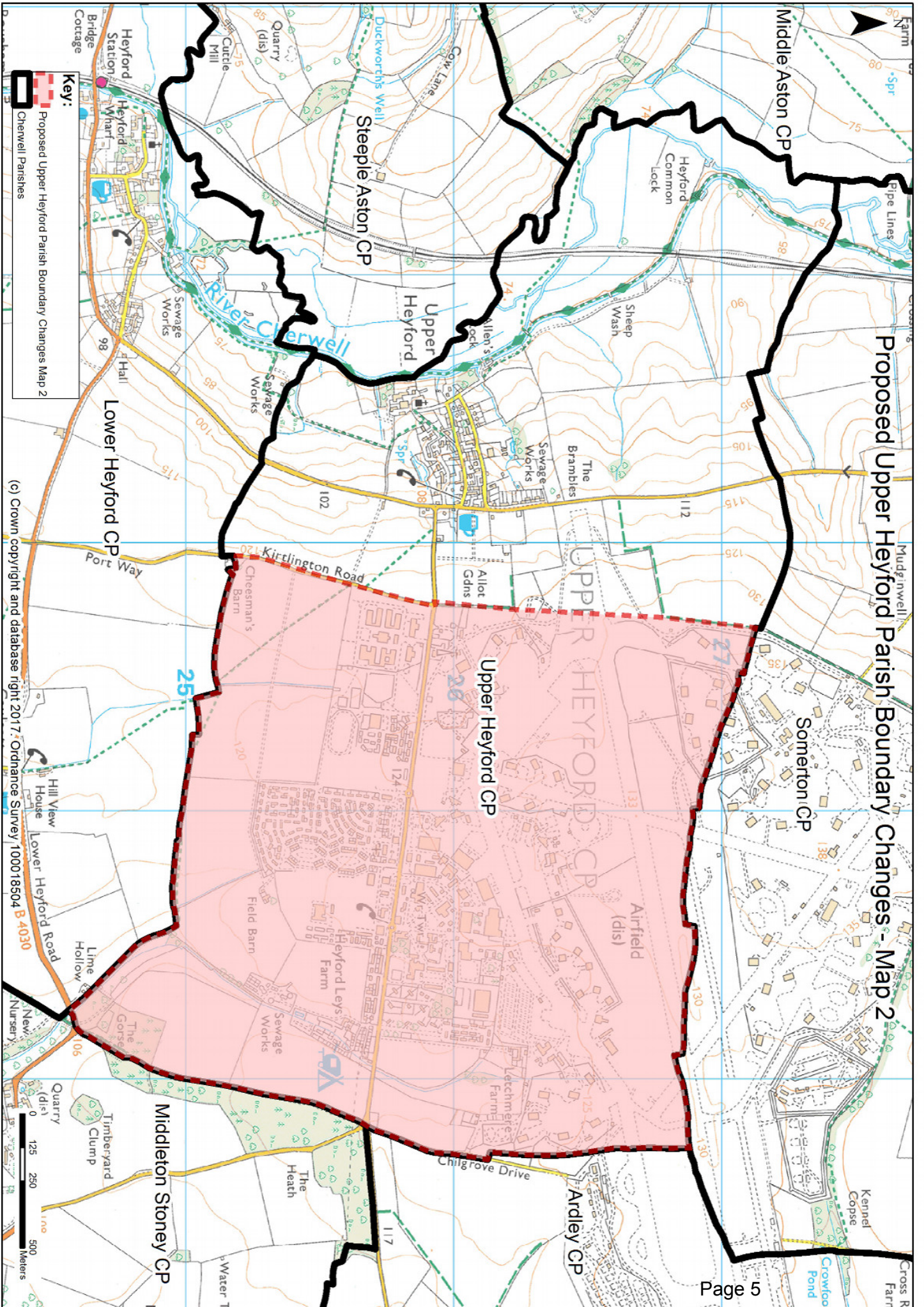
Existing Upper Heyford Parish Boundary

Key:
 Cherwell Parishes

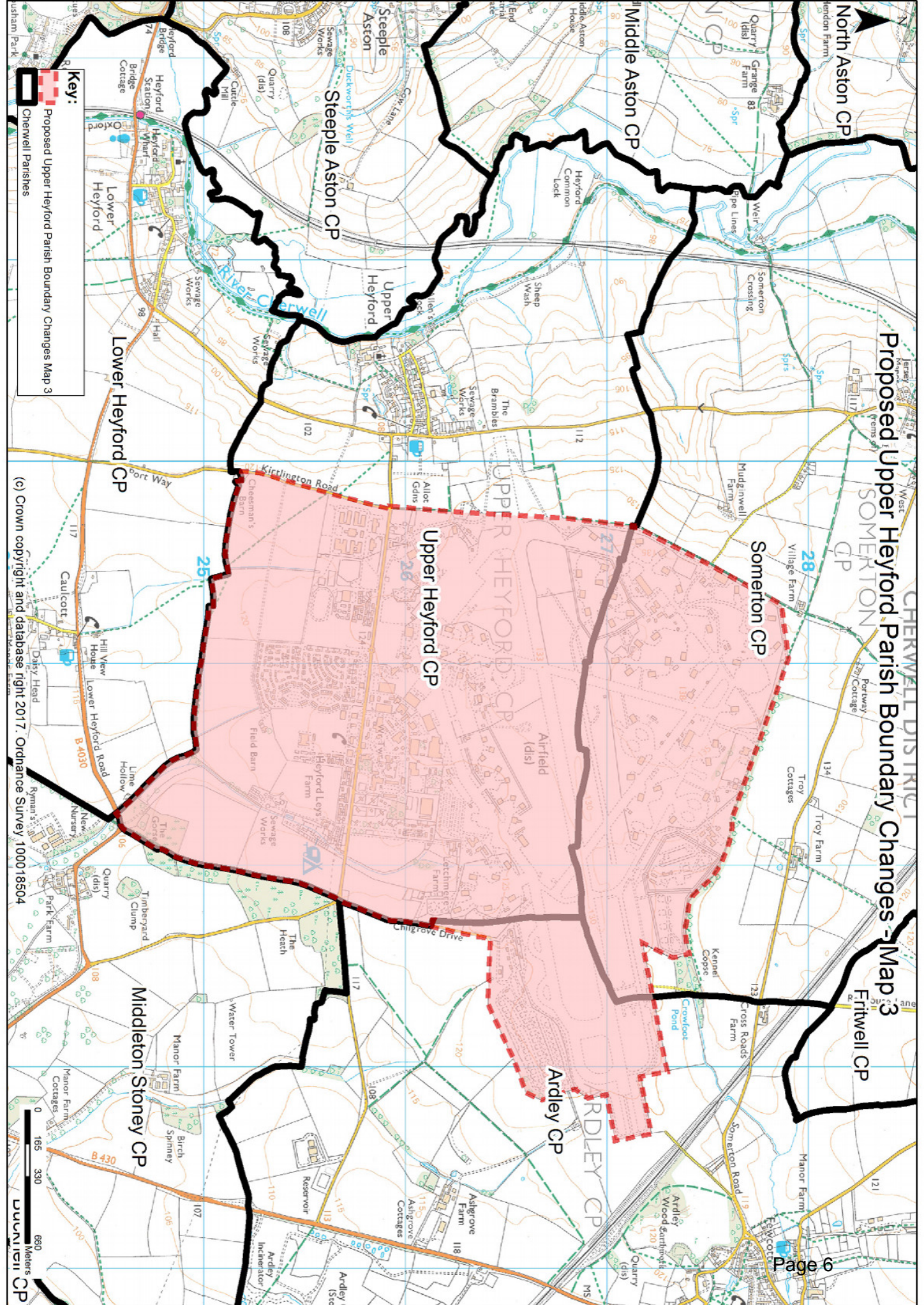
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Proposed Upper Heyford Parish Boundary Changes - Map 2



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Proposed Upper Heyford Parish Boundary Changes - Map 3

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Key:

-  Proposed Upper Heyford Parish Boundary Changes Map 3
-  Cherwell Parishes

0 165 330 660
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Tell us what you think of these suggestions

Name.....
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Address.....
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We will not share your name and address with anyone, we have only asked for these details so that we can monitor which areas of the parish have replied. If you would prefer, you can just tell us the street you live on, or simply put 'village' or 'park'.

Do you think it is a good idea for Upper Heyford to be split in two?

Yes

No

If you agree that it is a good idea, which of the proposed boundaries do you prefer?

The boundary on Map 2

The boundary on Map 3

If two parishes were to be created, what do you think they should be called?

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Do you have any further comments to make?

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