

Community Governance Review – Request by Romsey Town Council Options Document

1. Introduction

Romsey Town Council has submitted a request to Test Valley Borough Council, proposing that the boundary of the Town Council's area is extended to include "all current and planned urban areas identified as Romsey".

The Town Council has clarified that the request is to extend the existing area of the Town Council to include the full extent of the three Romsey Borough Council wards (Romsey Abbey, Romsey Cupernham and Romsey Tadburn).

Changes to boundaries of parishes such as that proposed by Romsey Town Council can only be made following a community governance review (CGR), which would be carried out by Test Valley Borough Council.

Test Valley Borough Council has agreed to carry out a CGR to consider the Town Council's request. Details of the process are set out in the Terms of Reference which have been approved by the Council, and anyone wishing to make representations is encouraged to read the terms of reference, which are available (with other relevant documents) on the Council's website:-

www.testvalley.gov.uk/cgr

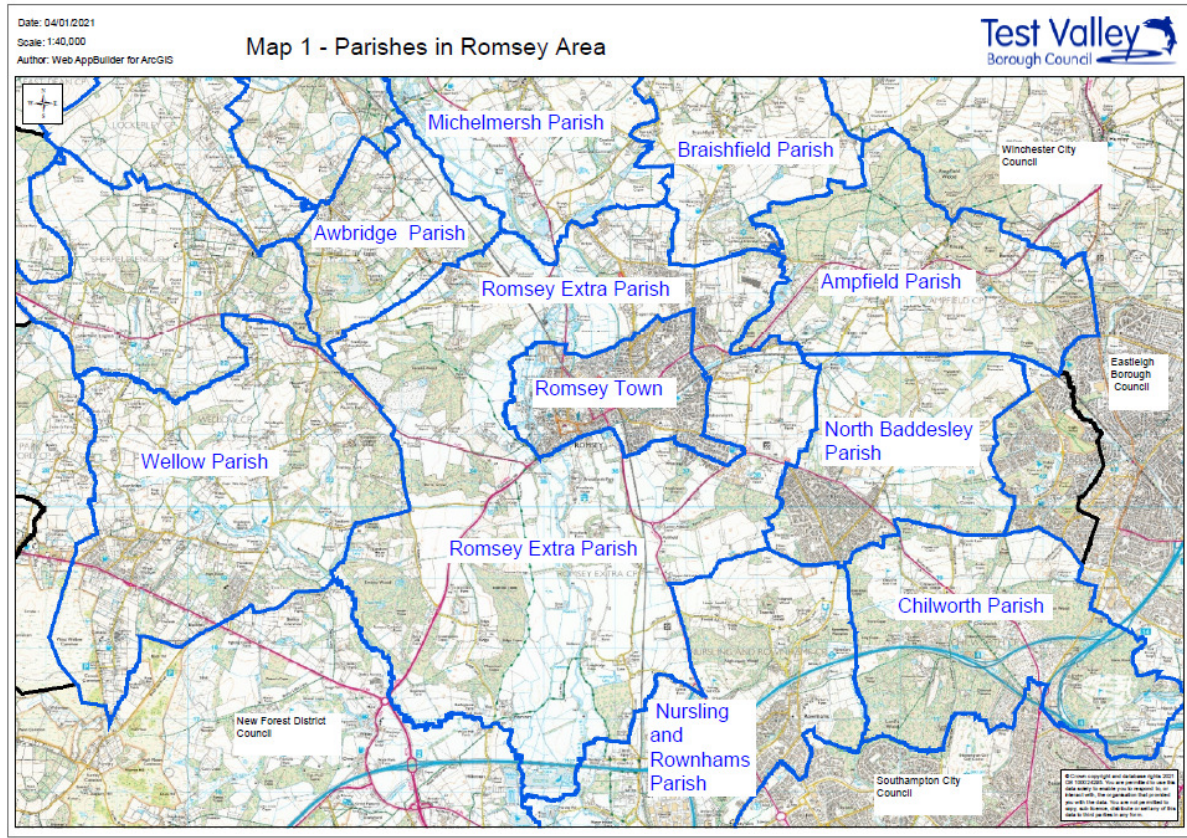
The area of the CGR is limited to Romsey Town and Romsey Extra Parish; however, the CGR will consider the possible effect of Romsey Town's request on other adjacent parishes.

This document sets out possible options for the outcome of the CGR process. The first four options (1A, 1B, 1C and 1D) consider possible outcomes if the Town Council's request is agreed. Options 2 and 3 are alternative possible outcomes of the CGR process.

This document is intended to assist those wishing to make representations in response to the CGR process. It should be emphasised that there may well be other alternative options for the community governance of the Romsey area which are not set out in this Options Document, and accordingly the Council will certainly take in account representations which make other alternative proposals for the area under consideration.

2. Current Parish Council Arrangements

The map below shows the existing boundaries of Romsey Town, Romsey Extra and the surrounding parishes. Larger versions of this and other maps included in this document are attached as appendices, and also available on the Council's website.

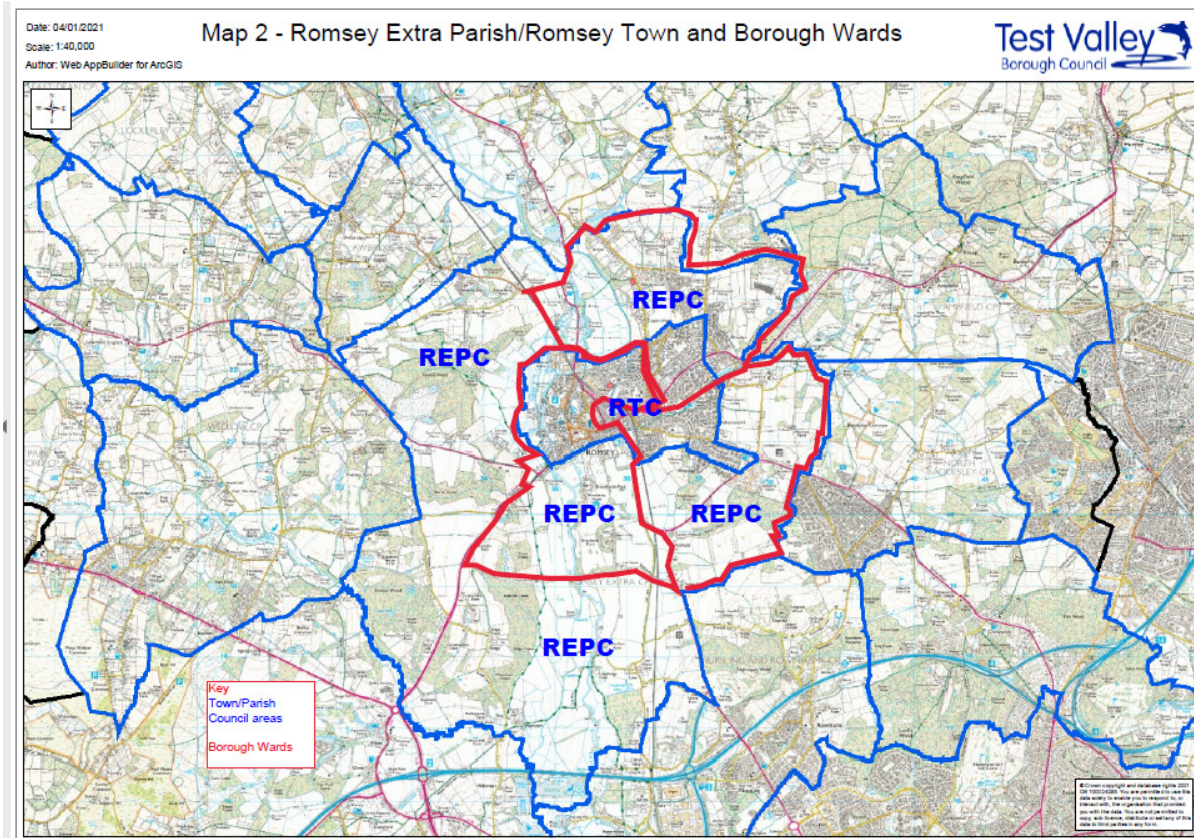


Map 1. Parishes in the Romsey area.

Romsey Town (Parish) covers the town centre, and is surrounded by Romsey Extra Parish.

The map above also shows the parishes adjoining Romsey Extra Parish. Some adjacent areas are outside Test Valley Borough Council's area. The legislation governing CGRs does not permit combining parishes across borough/district/city boundaries.

Map 2 below shows the areas of Romsey Town (labelled RTC) and Romsey Extra Parish (REPC), with the existing Romsey Borough ward boundaries of Romsey Abbey, Romsey Cupernham, and Romsey Tadburn overlaid (red boundaries).



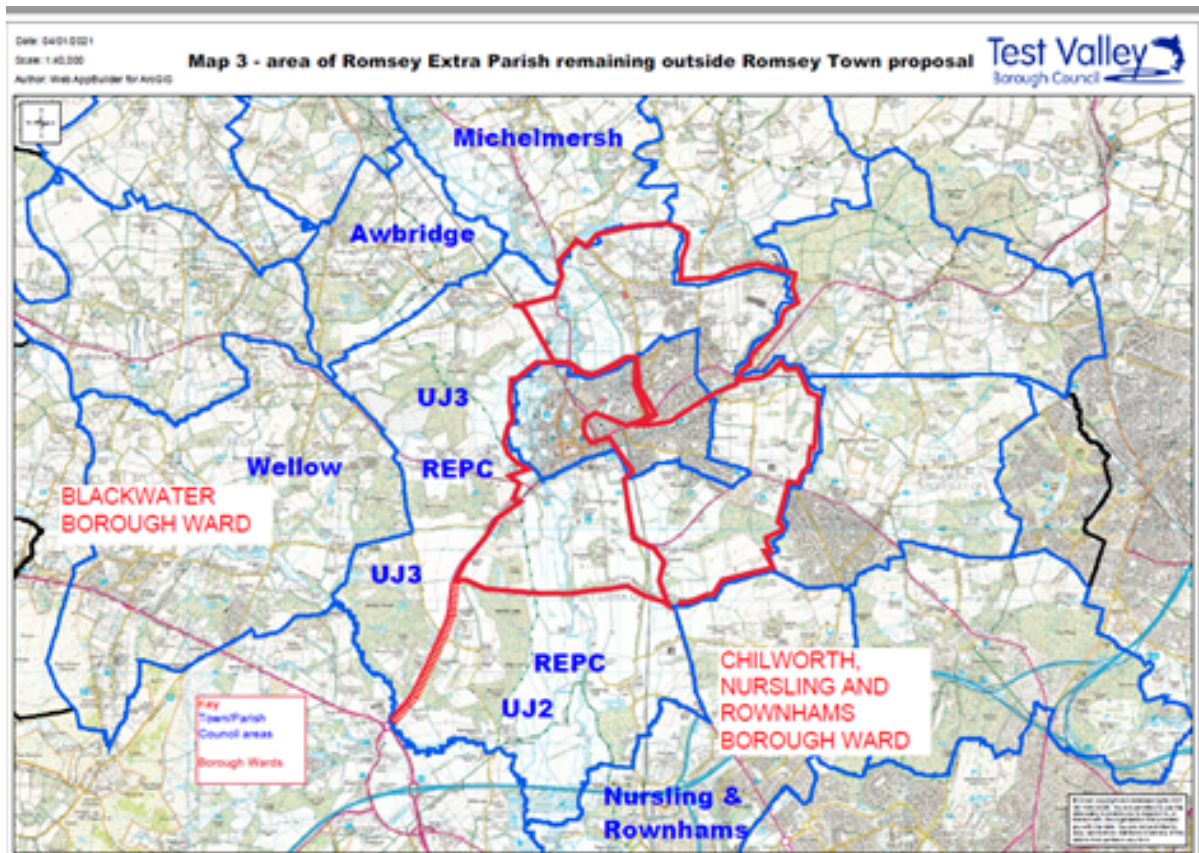
Map 2 – Romsey Extra Parish/Romsey Town and Borough Wards

Romsey Town Council’s request is for the existing boundary of Romsey Town (RTC on the map above) to be extended into Romsey Extra Parish (REPC on the map) so that Romsey Town’s area would extend to the area comprised in the three red-edged areas (the Borough Wards of Romsey Abbey, Romsey Cupernham, and Romsey Tadburn).

If accepted under the CGR, Romsey Town’s request would leave part of Romsey Extra Parish (the area to the west and south-west of Romsey). In that case, therefore, decisions would also need to be made as to the future governance arrangements for the remaining part of Romsey Extra Parish. Possible options are considered below (options 1A, 1B, 1C and 1D).

There is a total of 4590 electors in Romsey Extra Parish. If part of Romsey Extra Parish was incorporated into Romsey Town in accordance with Romsey Town’s request, 369 electors would be left in the remainder of Romsey Extra Parish.

The following map shows the area (labelled UJ2 and UJ3) which would be left in Romsey Extra Parish if Romsey Town's request was accepted.



Map 3 – Remainder of Romsey Extra

If Romsey Town's request were to be agreed under the CGR, the areas edged red would be the enlarged Romsey Town area. The red dotted line between the areas labelled UJ3 and UJ2 is the Borough Ward boundary between Mid test and Chilworth Nursling and Rownhams Borough Wards.

Area UJ3 (which covers the area of Romsey Extra to the west of the Romsey Borough wards, north-west/west of the A3090) comprises 293 electors, and is within Mid Test Borough Ward.

Area UJ2 (the area of Romsey Extra to the south of the Romsey Borough Wards, and east/south-east of the A3090) comprises 76 electors, and is within Chilworth, Nursling and Rownhams Borough Ward.

POSSIBLE OPTIONS FOR OUTCOME OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW

3. Option 1 – Agree Romsey Town’s request.

As noted above, Romsey Town’s request covers only part of Romsey Extra Parish. This section therefore considers possible options for the future governance of the remainder of Romsey Extra parish if Romsey Town’s request is accepted.

Option 1A - Agree Romsey Town’s request and retain Romsey Extra Parish Council to cover the remaining area of Romsey Extra Parish.

Under this option, the remaining area (UJ2 and UJ3 as shown on Map 3 above) with its 369 electors would remain in Romsey Extra Parish, and be covered by a retained Romsey Extra Parish Council. If this option were to be agreed, a decision would be needed on whether Romsey Extra Parish Council should remain at its existing size (six parish councillors) or be reduced to the legal minimum of five parish councillors.

Option 1B - Agree Romsey Town’s request and abolish Romsey Extra Parish Council – transfer remaining areas to adjoining parishes.

Under this option, the remainder of Romsey Extra Parish would be transferred to one or more of the adjacent parish councils.

It would be possible to transfer the whole of the remainder to one of the adjacent parishes, but this would result in some electors within the same parish voting in one Borough Ward, with others in that parish voting in a different Borough Ward.

This situation would be avoided if the remaining area were to be split along the Borough Ward boundary (shown with a dotted red line in Map 3), with UJ2 being transferred to Nursling and Rownhams Parish Council. In this scenario, the area labelled UJ3 could either be transferred in its entirety to one of the other adjacent Parishes (Wellow or Awbridge) or divided between these two Parishes along a suitable boundary (e.g. the A27 – with the area to the north being transferred to Awbridge, and the area to the south transferred to Wellow).

As part of the Community Governance process, representations from these adjacent parishes and Romsey Extra Parish (and residents in these parishes) responding to the possible permutations of this option would be welcomed. In order to properly consider such representations, an explanation of the reasoning behind the representation would be helpful.

Option 1C - Agree Romsey Town’s request and abolish Romsey Extra Parish Council – Establish Parish Meeting.

Under this option, the remaining area would remain as Romsey Extra Parish, but the Parish Council would be abolished. As is the case with other parishes without a parish council, decisions on parish matters would be taken by a “Parish Meeting” (a meeting of residents from the parish). At least two such meetings each year are required in a parish without a parish council.

Option 1D - Agree Romsey Town's request and abolish Romsey Extra Parish Council – remaining area to be unparished.

Currently all of Test Valley Borough is within a parish or town council area. Removing parish status from this remaining area would remove any formal governance arrangements at parish level. In this situation, as the area would no longer be a parish, the requirements for parish meetings to be held would not apply to the area.

4. Option 2 – Merge Romsey Town and Romsey Extra Parish, with a new parish council covering the merged area.

This option goes further than Romsey Town Council's request, and would see a single parish council constituted, overseeing a parish comprising an area of Romsey Town and Romsey Extra Parish combined.

5. Option 3 – Group Romsey Town and Romsey Extra Parish under a common parish council

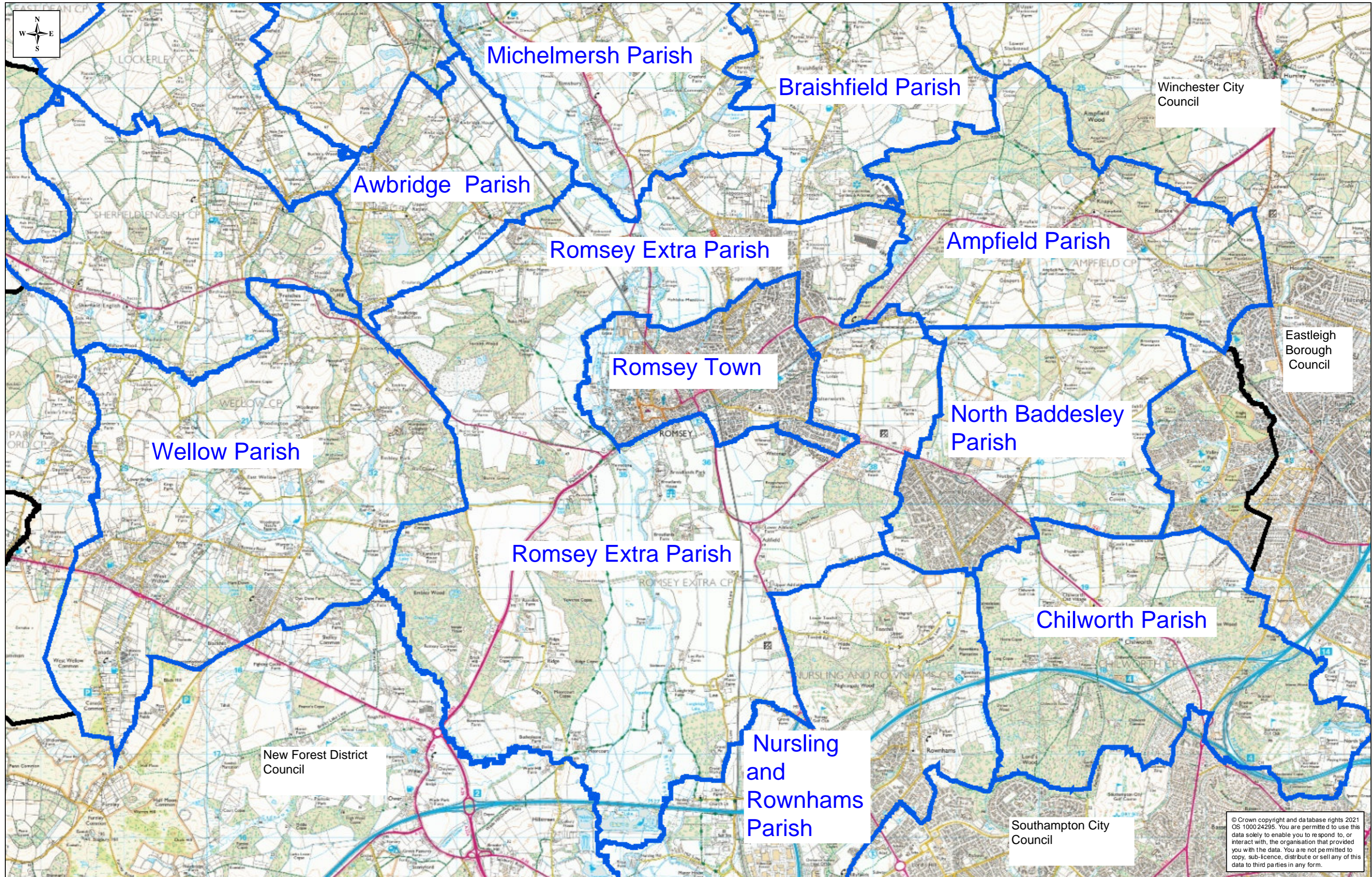
Under this option (unlike Option 2), both existing parishes would remain a separate parishes and would not be merged. The boundaries of each parish would remain unchanged. The two existing parish councils would be abolished and replaced by a new "common" parish council covering both parishes.

6. Option 4 – No Change

This option would reject Romsey Town's request, and leave parish governance matters exactly as they are at present.

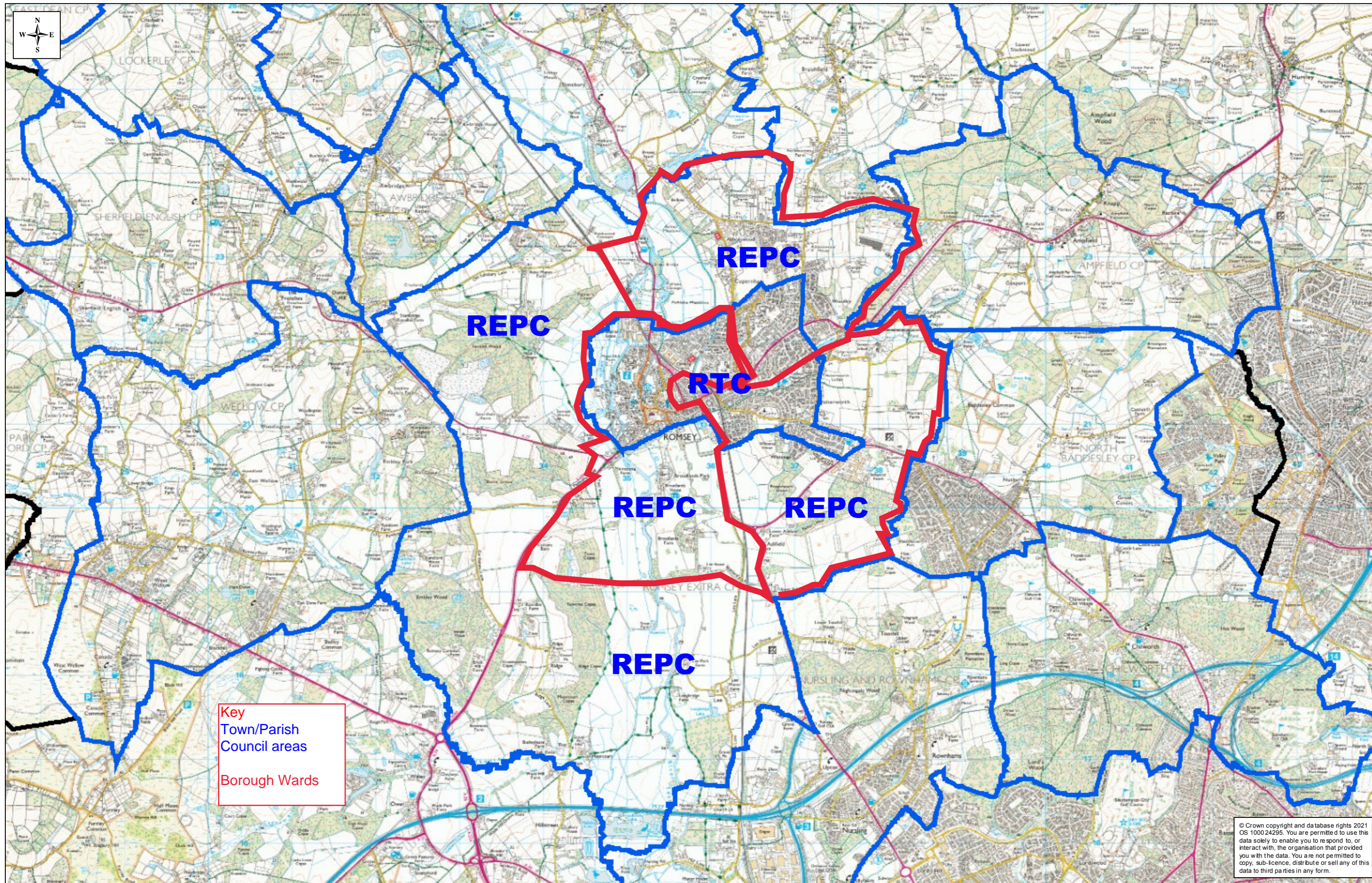
Appendices – Maps 1, 2 and 3

Map 1 - Parishes in Romsey Area

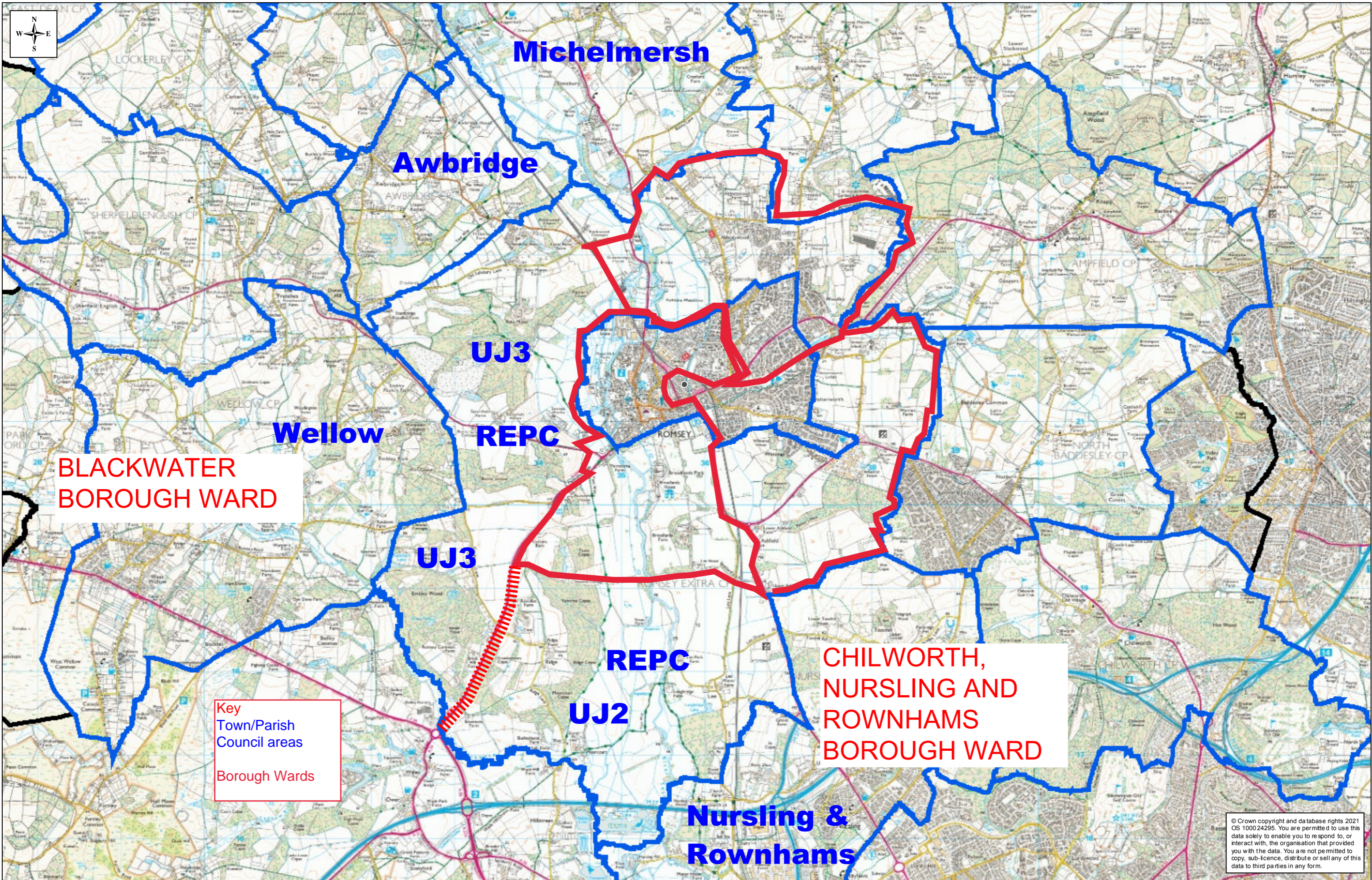


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Map 2 - Romsey Extra Parish/Romsey Town and Borough Wards



Map 3 - area of Romsey Extra Parish remaining outside Romsey Town proposal



**BLACKWATER
BOROUGH WARD**

Key
 Town/Parish
 Council areas
 Borough Wards

**CHILWORTH,
NURSLING AND
ROWNHAMS
BOROUGH WARD**