

Polling District and Polling Places Review Consultation Paper

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Haringey ward boundaries were reviewed by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) with the new wards coming into force from the local elections on 5 May 2022. A comprehensive review of the borough’s polling places, and polling districts was conducted over the summer of 2021, overseen by a Members’ working group. The outcomes were supported by a full communications plan. The revised polling scheme was approved by the Corporate Committee on 16 November 2021 and was implemented at the May 2022 Elections.
- 1.2 The following terms are being used in this document:
- Polling Districts: A polling district is a geographical area created by dividing parliamentary constituencies. For the proposed local elections, they are divisions of the wards in the borough.
 - Polling Places: A polling place is the building or area in which the polling stations will be designated. There will only be one polling place proposed for each polling district.
 - Polling Stations: A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place.
- 1.3 The post-election review included feedback on polling stations from candidates and agents, polling station staff, polling station inspectors, the RO team and comment/complaints received from voters in polling stations

Key Findings from the Local Elections 2022 Feedback

- Most of the new polling scheme approved in 2021 worked well.
- One polling station, Alexandra Park Library, was not available for the May 2022 election in Alexandra Park Ward (APK) and St Andrews Centre was used instead for polling stations 2X and 3X. This will need to continue until the library reopens (expected to be December 2022).
- Complaints were recorded at many polling stations about electors not knowing that polling stations had changed despite the comms plan which included a flyer with their poll card, social media activity, clear channel digital posters, information in their Household Notification Letter (HNL) in January and posters at polling stations, as well as at buildings that were no longer being used.

2. Scope of the review

2.1 It was agreed that a review of polling places and polling districts would be carried out as follows:

- A review of the population mapping to ensure that the capacity remains catered for by the polling scheme. Changes would only be brought forward where there was an issue.
- The Electoral Commission guidance figure for the capacity of a single polling station is currently 2500. This will be reviewed when the secondary legislation of the Elections Act has been laid. It is anticipated that polling stations will be busier due to voter ID cards. A lower figure of 2300 has been used in preparing this set of proposals and this will be reviewed when the new guidance is published.
- There were two wards where the district boundaries need to be fully reviewed
 - Noel Park (NOP) has a growing population so further polling station capacity will be required
 - The spread of the electorate in West Green (WEG) is not balanced so needs to be revisited
- The following principles would also be applied:
 - Minimal change
 - Will write to all residents where the polling place has changed
 - Minimal additional polling stations/portable buildings
 - 10 – 15 minute walk where possible

2.2 The following issues needed to be considered:

- The turnout was comparatively low compared to that of a General Election. This means that there is a group of electors who did not vote at this election who will be voting at future elections at a new venue
- There is a balance in considering further changes to polling stations and polling districts as further change risks greater confusion, following on from the wider changes agreed in 2021.
- A further review will be needed for the changes resulting from the Parliamentary Boundary Review which is anticipated to be complete by July 2023. This will introduce new parliamentary boundaries/constituencies

- The Elections Act 2022 will likely be in force by the time of the next election – this brings in requirements for voter ID, which will include the need for a private space for electors who cover their face for religious reasons and there are additional accessibility requirements (detail of this is not yet published). This makes the use of portable buildings more problematic, thus are only being recommended where there are absolutely no alternatives
- Anomalies identified following the review will also be addressed as any changes from the review are uploaded into the register – this includes issues raised by members and our hand delivery staff where properties had either been mapped to the wrong area or a property had not been included in the correct district
- The Electoral Commission are currently consulting on the Draft Guidance for Returning Officers: Assistance with voting for persons with disabilities, under the Elections Act 2022. The consultation can be found at [Consultation on draft guidance for Returning Officers: Assistance with voting for persons with disabilities | Electoral Commission](#)
 - Polling places proposed in this report have been put forward because they are or can be made accessible.
 - Once the guidance is finalised, this will be used in planning for the use of polling places and the equipment provided to each station

2.3 Any issues in polling places and facilities that have been identified via feedback have been noted and will be built into planning for future elections. This will include making improvements to the commissioning and accessibility of portable buildings, where these are necessary.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 A two-stage consultation on the proposed changes will take place Stage 1 has been completed - the Returning Officer (RO) is required to provide comments on the proposals, and these are included in this document
- Stage 2 – notice of a public consultation was given on 20 September. The end date has been reset for 24 November to allow full consultation of:
 - Members (especially those who are in the wards where there are proposed changes)
 - the public
 - organisations who have an interest in supporting accessibility
 - The ward members for each of the wards where district changes are proposed will be invited to meet with Electoral Services to provide comments
 - It is planned to present the Polling District and Polling Place Review to the Corporate Committee on 2 February 2023. If the changes are approved, the register will be republished as soon after that meeting as possible.

4. Polling District and polling place review – Proposals – September 2022

4.1. Noel Park

Requirement: The population in Noel Park is growing and, in the 2021 review, there was insufficient polling station capacity to meet this need. Further work has been carried out to find new potential polling places, particularly in the west of the ward. The east of the ward is also a large area but there is enough capacity provided by the Noel Park Primary School and St Marks Church Hall. The streets are long here but the walking distance is within the 10 minute walk, based on Google Maps.

The Clarendon Recovery College was suggested as a potential venue but it is changing use to a night shelter so is not suitable for use as a polling place.

Two options have been identified as potentially viable.

Proposal 1

This is based on using either Faith Miracle Church (FMC) (green dot in the image below) or McQueen's Theatre (pink dot) on Coburg Road. The theatre is a slightly better venue as it has all level access, whereas ramps would need to be built for the church.

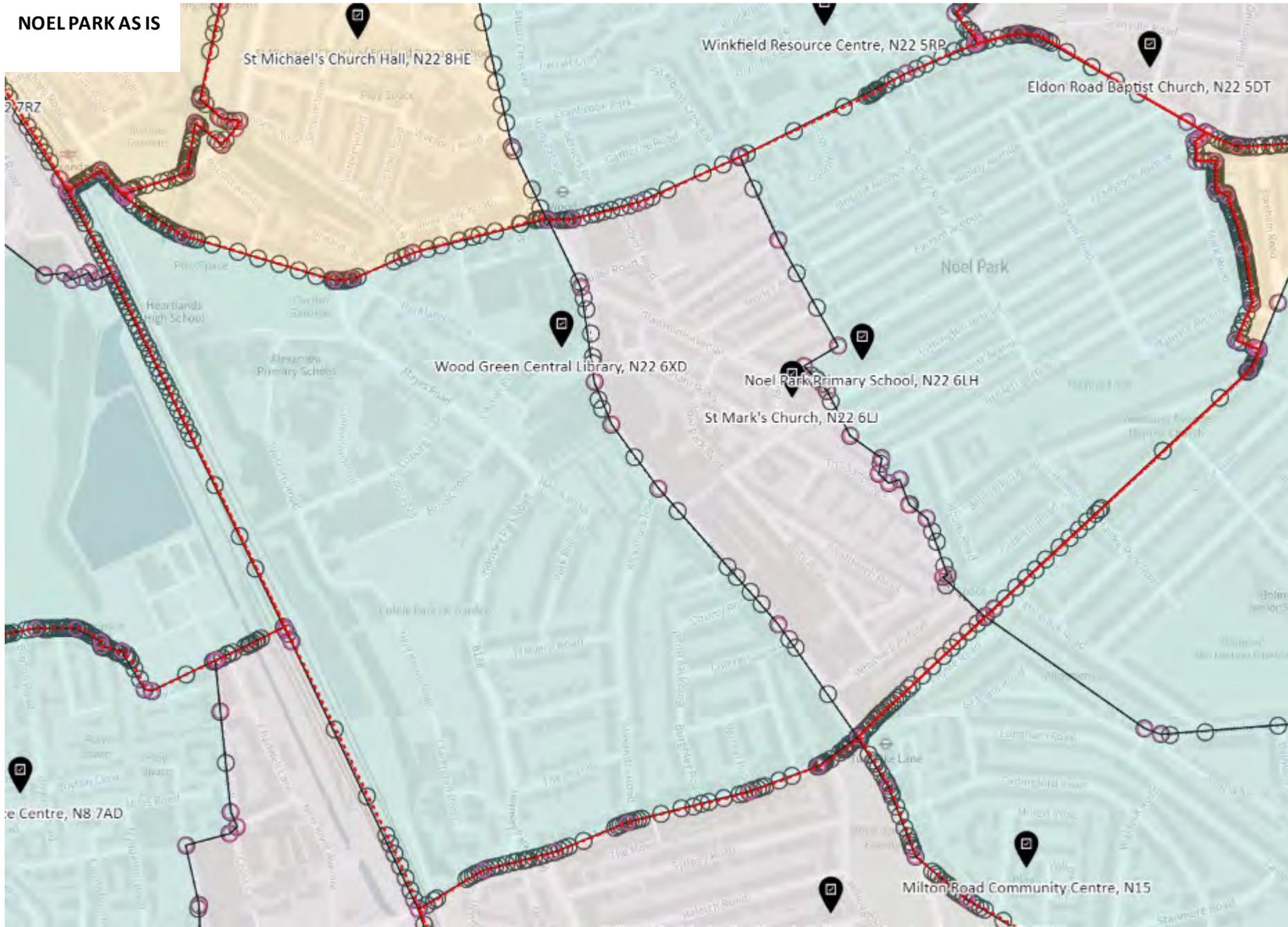
Keep the boundaries of the polling districts to the east of the High Road the same. Split the west of the borough in two. It looks slightly odd on a map, but should not feel too strange to a resident going to either polling place.

Electoralates

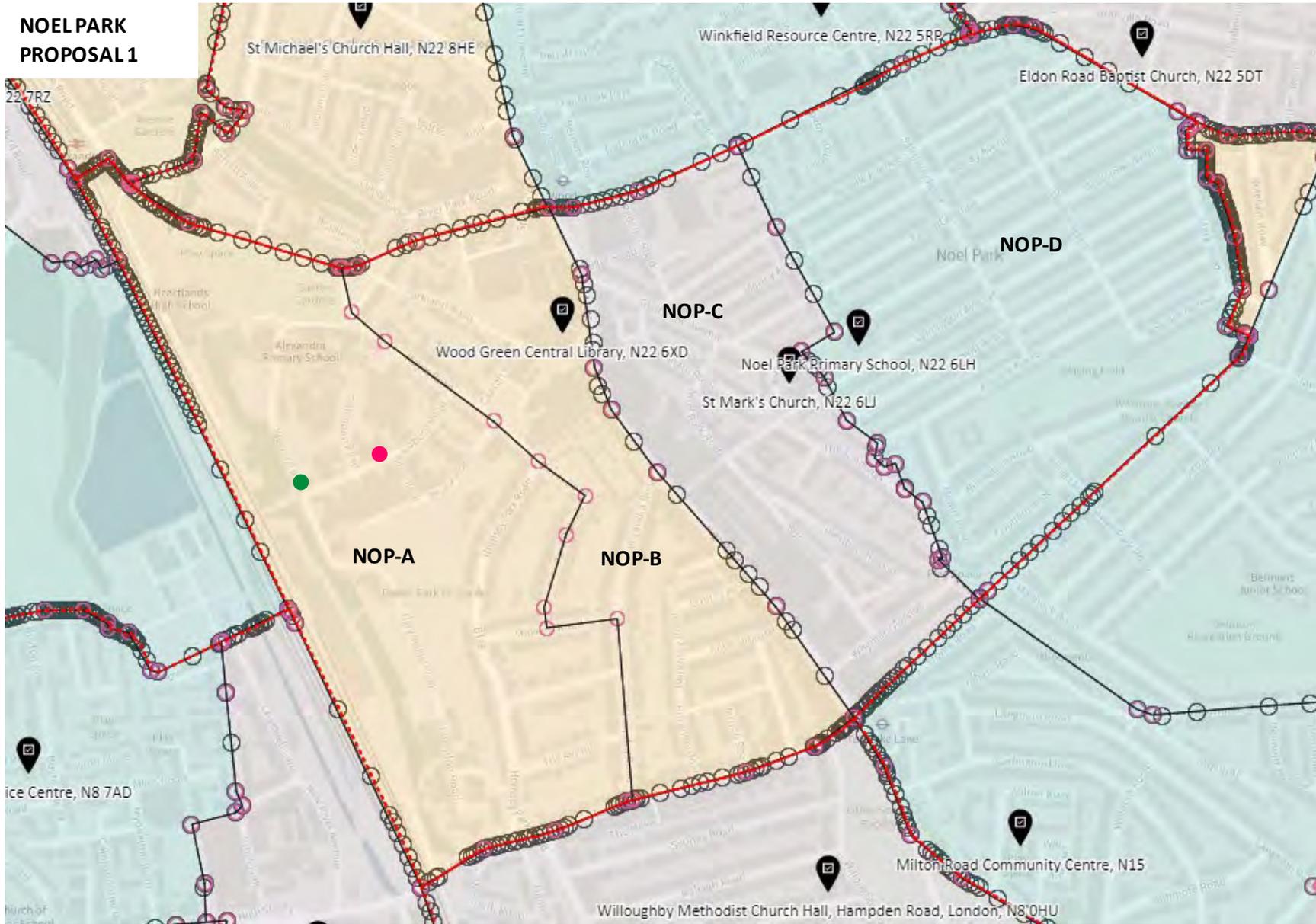
Old district name	Previous electorate	New district name	Polling Place	No of polling stations	Proposed electorate	Comments
NOP-A	-	NOP-A	FMC or McQueens Theatre (previously Wood Green Library)	1 (has capacity for 2)	1316	Gives future capacity for the development
NOP-A	3226	NOP-B	Wood Green Library	2 (has capacity for 2)	1910	Gives future capacity for developments
NOP-B	2124	NOP-C	St Marks Church	1 (has capacity for 2)	2124	
NOP-C	4071	NOP-D	Noel Park Primary School	2 (has capacity for 2)	4071	

Returning Officer Comments for Noel Park Ward: This ward has a lack of polling station capacity to meet the requirements for the growing population resulting from new developments. This proposal addresses that issue by creating a new polling district and adding a further polling place. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation.

NOEL PARK AS IS



**NOEL PARK
PROPOSAL 1**



Proposal 2

The Alevi Cultural Centre and Cem-evi (green dot shown in the image below) has all the facilities required for a polling place and the people responsible for the building agreed that it would be possible to use it.

Current polling district 'NOP – A' would be split west to east and would become 'NOP-A' and 'NOP – B'. As with proposal 1, there would be no changes to the other polling districts, apart from renaming them.

Populations

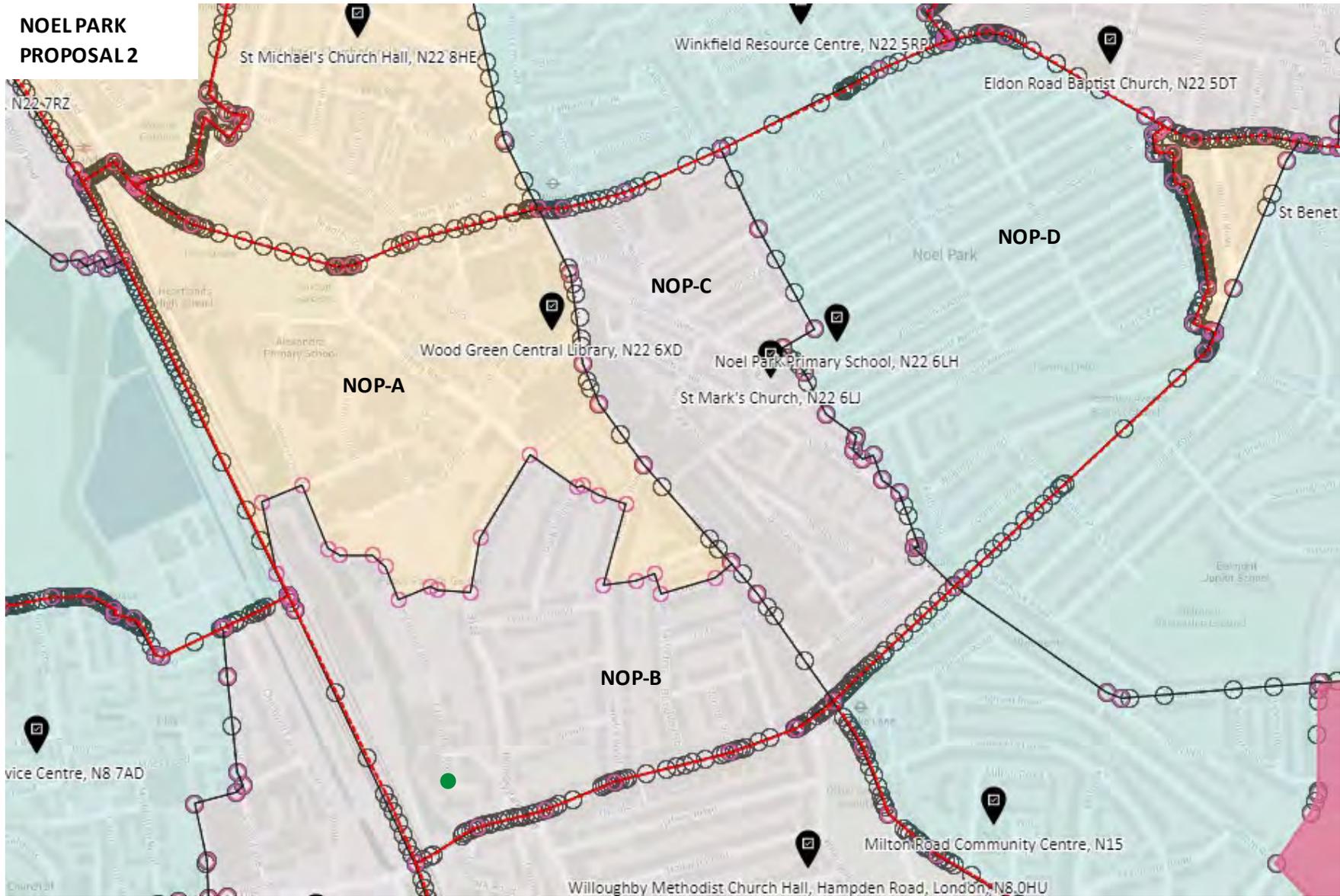
Old district name	Previous electorate	New district name	Polling Place	No of polling stations	Proposed electorate	Comments
NOP-A	2319	NOP-A	Wood Green Library	2 (has capacity for 2)	1243 (plus anticipated growth due to developments)	Gives future capacity for the development
NOP-A	-	NOP-B	Alevi Cultural Centre and Cem-evi (previously Wood Green Library)	1 (has capacity for 2)	1983	Gives future capacity for developments
NOP-B	2124	NOP-C	St Marks Church	1 (has capacity for 2)	2124	
NOP-C	4071	NOP-D	Noel Park Primary School	2 (has capacity for 2)	4071	

Returning Officer Comments for Noel Park Ward: This ward has a lack of polling station capacity to meet the requirements for the growing population resulting from new developments. This proposal addresses that issue by creating a new polling district and adding a further polling place. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation .

Comparing options:

Both proposed options would work well. Option 1 provides capacity nearer to the new developments, while option 2 gives a spread of venues across the ward.

NOEL PARK PROPOSAL 2



4.2 West Green

Requirement

The electorate currently allocated to the Milton Hall Community Centre is too large. This worked as a large single for the local elections but was not ideal and would not work with a larger turnout (at a General Election, for example).

Proposal

Under this proposal, the majority of the changes will be made to polling districts WEG-C and WEG-D, with minor changes to the south of WEG-A

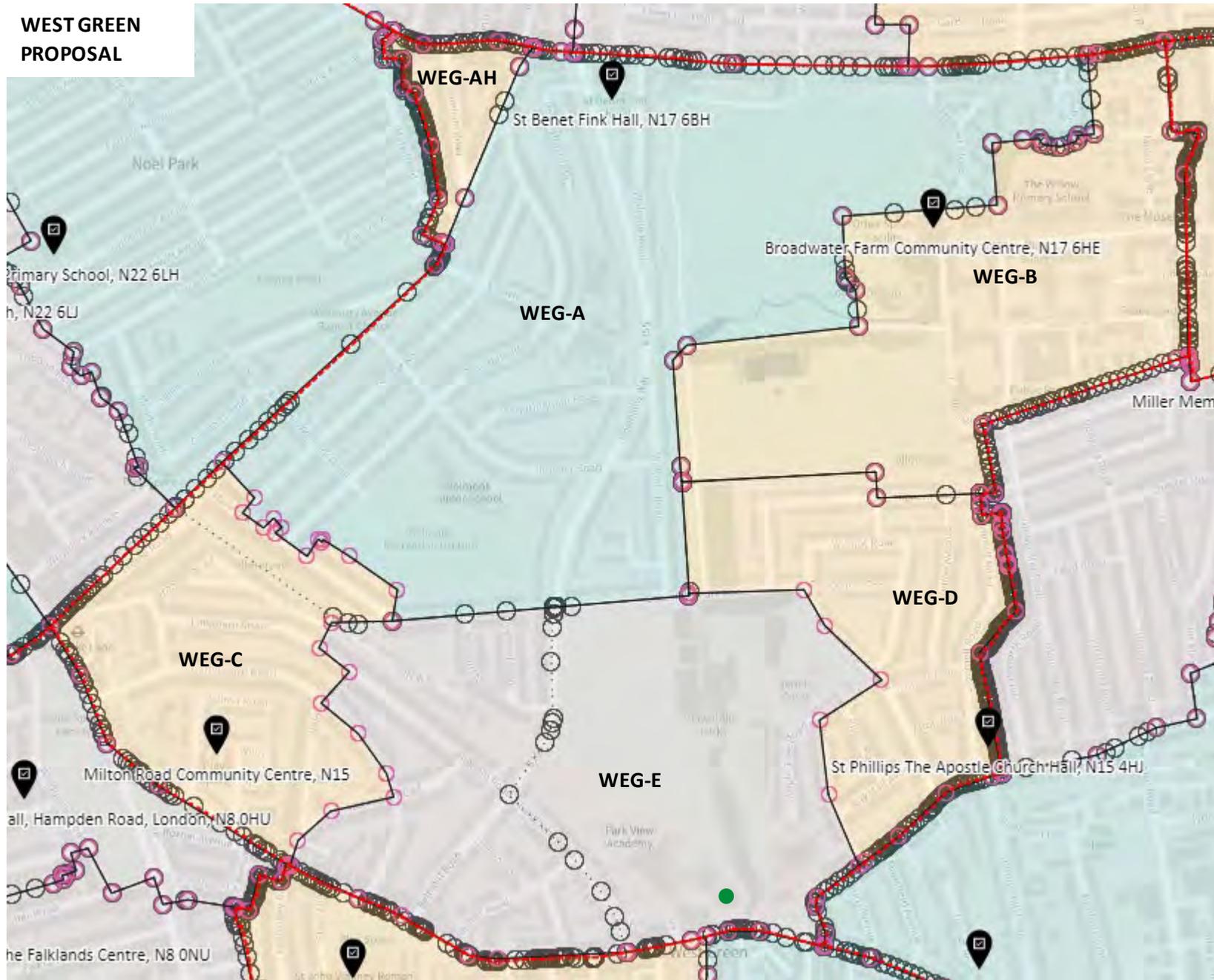
It is proposed to move the north border of the Milton Community Centre ward slightly further north, to reduce the distance for those near the boundary who are currently allocated to St Benet Fink Hall. The east boundary of that district will be moved to the west and the remaining area will be split in two, with the Harris Primary Academy being designated as a polling place, as it was previously

A portable building was previously used as a polling station on Downhills Park Road. Cllr Williams suggested reinstating that. This has been considered but there is enough capacity in fixed buildings in the ward to resolve the capacity issues at Milton Community Hall. The Grove School, which is where the portable was previously sited, has confirmed that it does not have suitable space that could be used without closing the school. It is a school for children and young people with autism so closing it would be very disruptive.

Old district name	Previous electorate	New district name	Polling Place	No of polling stations	Proposed electorate	Comments
WEG-A and AH	3140 + 235	WEG-A and AH	St Benet Fink Hall	2 (has capacity for 2)	2942 + 235	Small amount of change to the south border
WEG-B	1713	WEG-B	Broadwater Farm Community Centre	1 (has capacity for 2)	1713	No change
WEG-C	3175	WEG-C	Milton Hall Community Centre	1 (has capacity for 1)	1730	Smaller electorate
WEG-D	1879	WEG-D	St Phillip the Apostle Church Hall	1 (has capacity for 1)	1428	Smaller electorate
-	-	WEG-E	Harris Primary Academy (green dot in the image below)	1 (has capacity for 1)	2040	This will be at the school library – year 6 will still be able to use the school, via a different entrance

Returning Officer Comments for West Green Ward: This ward has a too high an electorate allocated to the polling place in WEG-C; it does not have sufficient capacity. This proposal addresses that issue by creating a new polling district and adding a further polling place. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation.

WEST GREEN PROPOSAL



Analysis of the population statistics has shown that most polling places have enough capacity but that a further look at some of the polling places in Hornsey and Tottenham Central was needed. The following proposals have been developed.

4.3 Hornsey

Requirement: the electorate of all the polling districts have been reviewed. The electorate allocated to the Kurdish Advice Centre is 3085 which makes it a very large single polling station. This was previously a double polling station, but the capacity of the room is too tight.

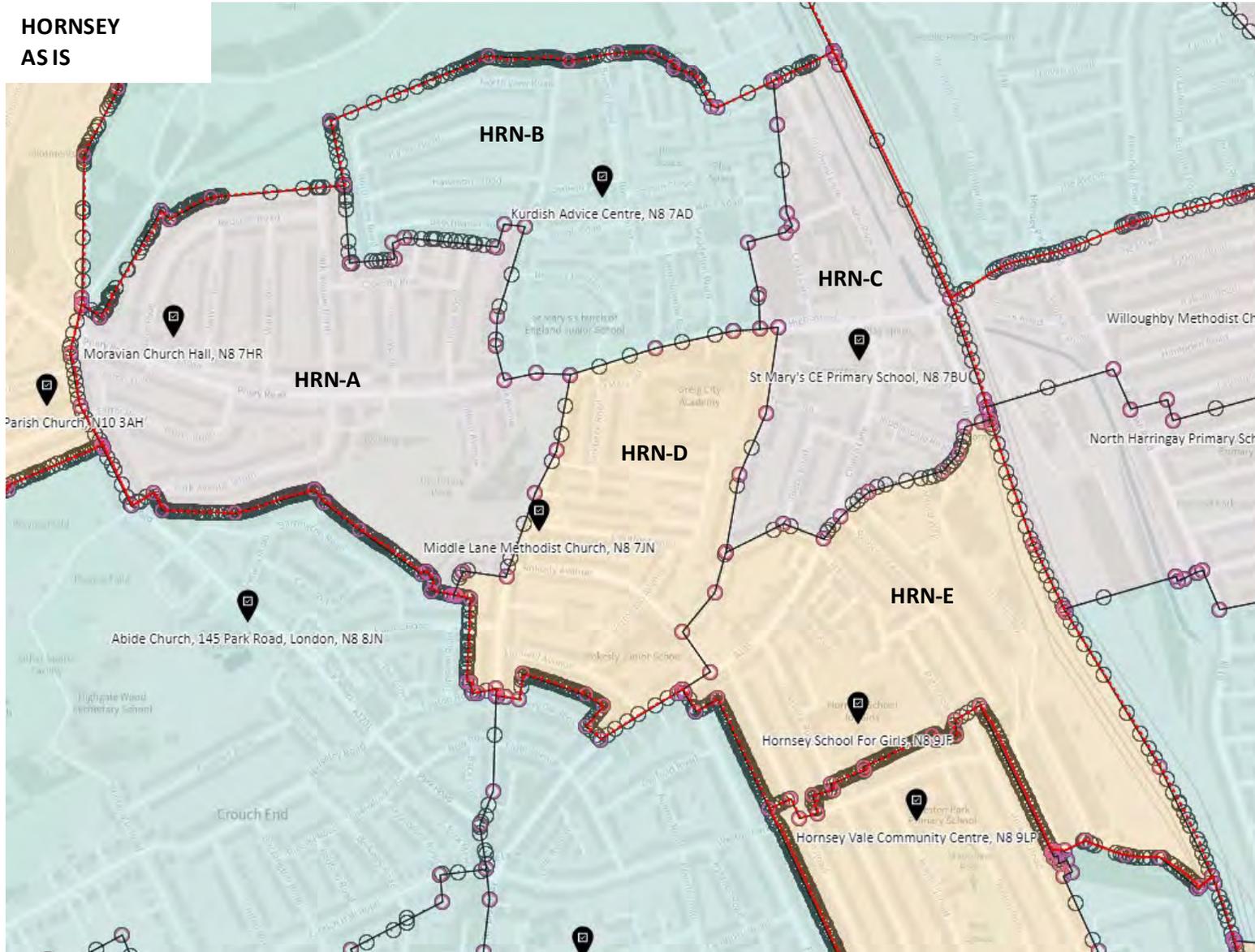
Proposal: It is proposed to move the south boundary of polling district HRN-B north, increasing the electorate for polling district HRN-D (Middle Lane Methodist Church).

Electorates

Old district name	Previous electorate	New district name	Polling Station Name	No of polling stations	Proposed electorate	Comments
HRN-A	2253	HRN-A	Moravian Church Hall	1 (has capacity for 2)	2253	No change
HRN-B	3085	HRN-B	Kurdish Advice Centre	1 (has capacity for 1)	2513	Smaller electorate
HRN-C	2321	HRN-C	St Mary's Primary School	1 (has capacity for 1)	2321	Further visit to be carried out to look at ways to try to keep the school open
HRN-B/HRN-D	1738	HRN-D	Middle Lane Methodist Church (taking some of the electorate previously allocated to the Kurdish Centre)	1 (has capacity for 2)	2310	Larger electorate – plenty capacity at this venue
HRN-E	1709	HRN-E	Hornsey School for Girls	1 (has capacity for 2)	1709	No change

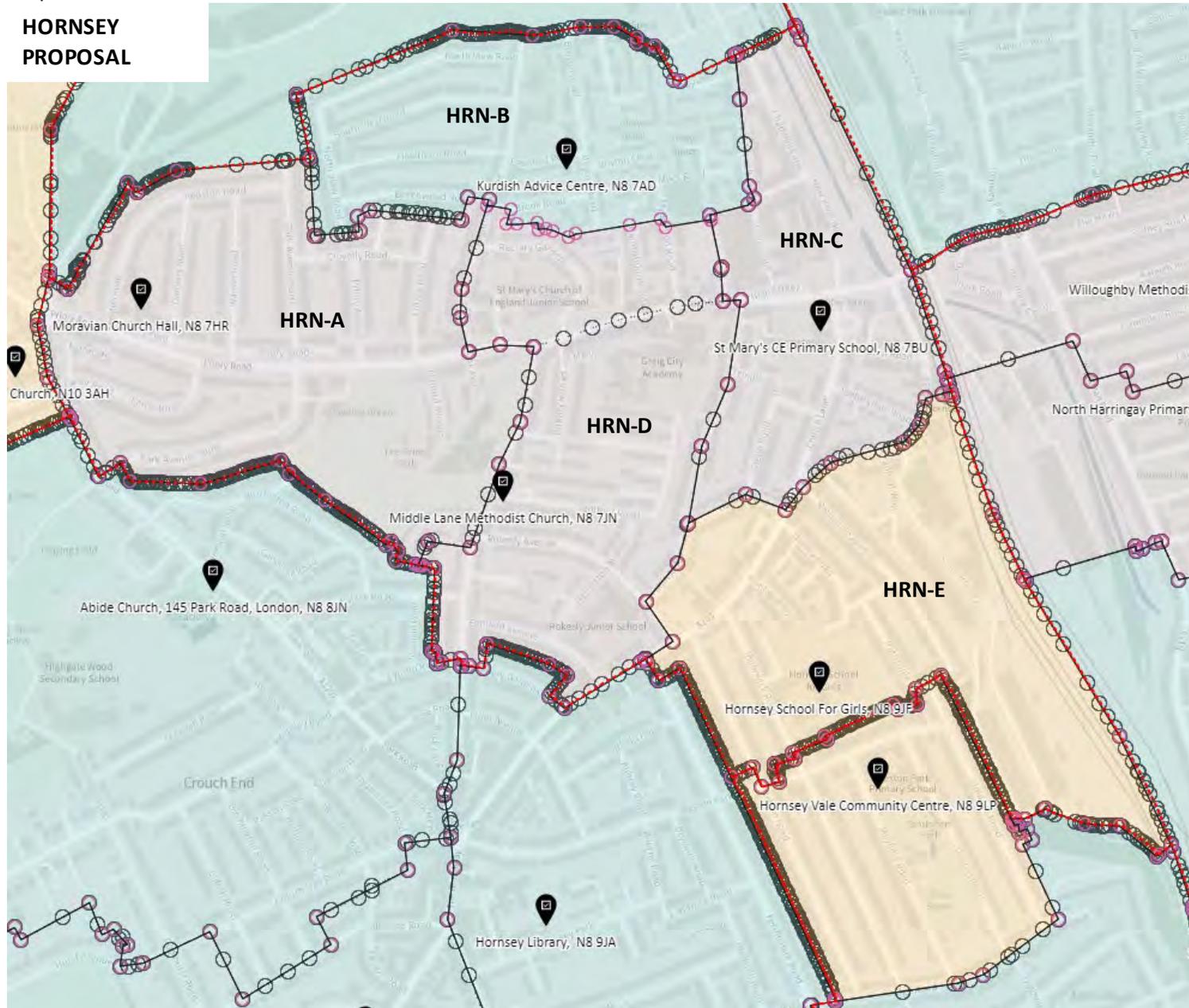
Returning Officer Comments for West Green Ward: This ward has a too high an electorate allocated to the polling place in HRN-B; it does not have sufficient capacity. This proposal addresses that issue by moving the district boundary to redistribute the electorate allocated to the polling places in HRN-B and HRN-D. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation.

**HORNSEY
AS IS**



Proposal

**HORNSEY
PROPOSAL**



4.4. Tottenham Central and Seven Sisters

Requirement: The electorate allocated to Tottenham Green Leisure Centre is too large. This worked as two large double polling stations for the 2022 local election, but was not ideal and would not work with a larger turnout (at a General Election, for example).

In addition, in the event of a snap General Election where Alexandra Palace could not be secured for use as a count venue, the sports hall may be used and therefore will not be available for use as a polling place. Another, smaller space at the Leisure Centre would be used instead, or at the adjacent Marcus Garvey Library. By designating the site of Tottenham Green Leisure Centre / Marcus Garvey Library as the polling place for polling district TCL-C, the Returning Officer will be free to locate the polling stations at any room/venue on this site.

There is another venue within the ward, West Green Baptist Church, that would be suitable but this is currently allocated to polling district SES-A in Seven Sisters ward. The Electoral Commission's guidance states that a polling place should be in the ward but SES-A does not have a suitable venue in the district so an exception was made.

It is now proposed to revert West Green Baptist Church for use in Tottenham Central. This is a situation where the justification can be made to allocate a portable building to the Seven Sisters Ward in order to locate the polling place within the perimeter of SES-A. It is proposed to identify a suitable location as part of the work with the PAS team to review the specification of the portable buildings. A portable building was previously used in that area, but this is in a different district now.

Populations

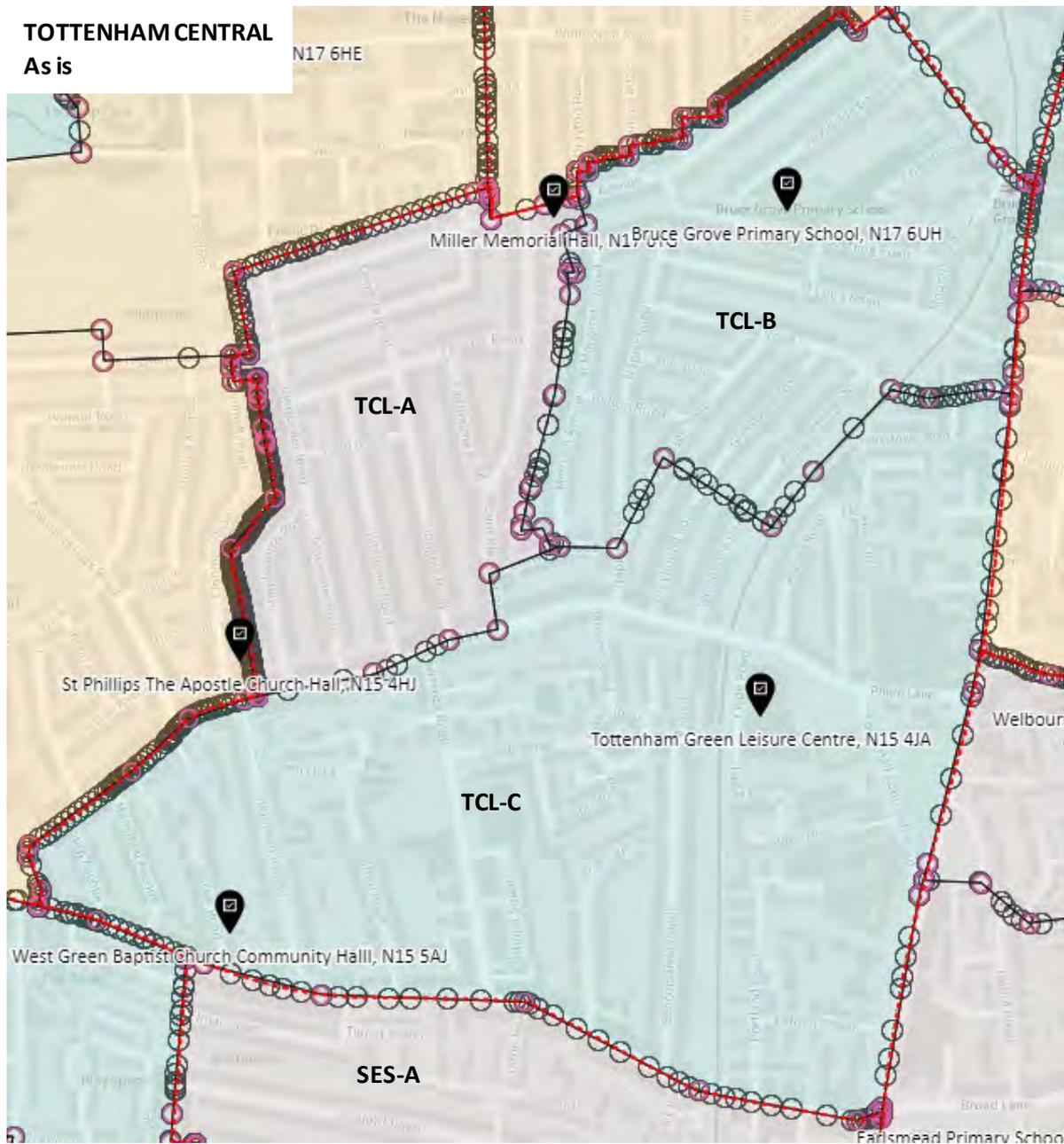
Old district name	Previous electorate	New district name	Polling Place	No of polling stations	Proposed electorate	Comments
TCL-A	2156	TCL-A	Miller Memorial Hall	1 (has capacity for 1)	2156	No change
TCL-B	2523	TCL-B	Bruce Grove Primary School	1 (has capacity for 1)	2523	Visit to school required to check space used
TCL-C	5220	TCL-C	Dorset Halls/West Green Baptist Church	1 (has capacity for 2)	1911	Proposed to return this to TCL from SES
TCL-C	0	TCL-D	Tottenham Green Leisure Centre/Marcus Garvey Library	1 (has capacity for 2/3)	3309	Smaller electorate

Name	Electorate
SES-A	2359

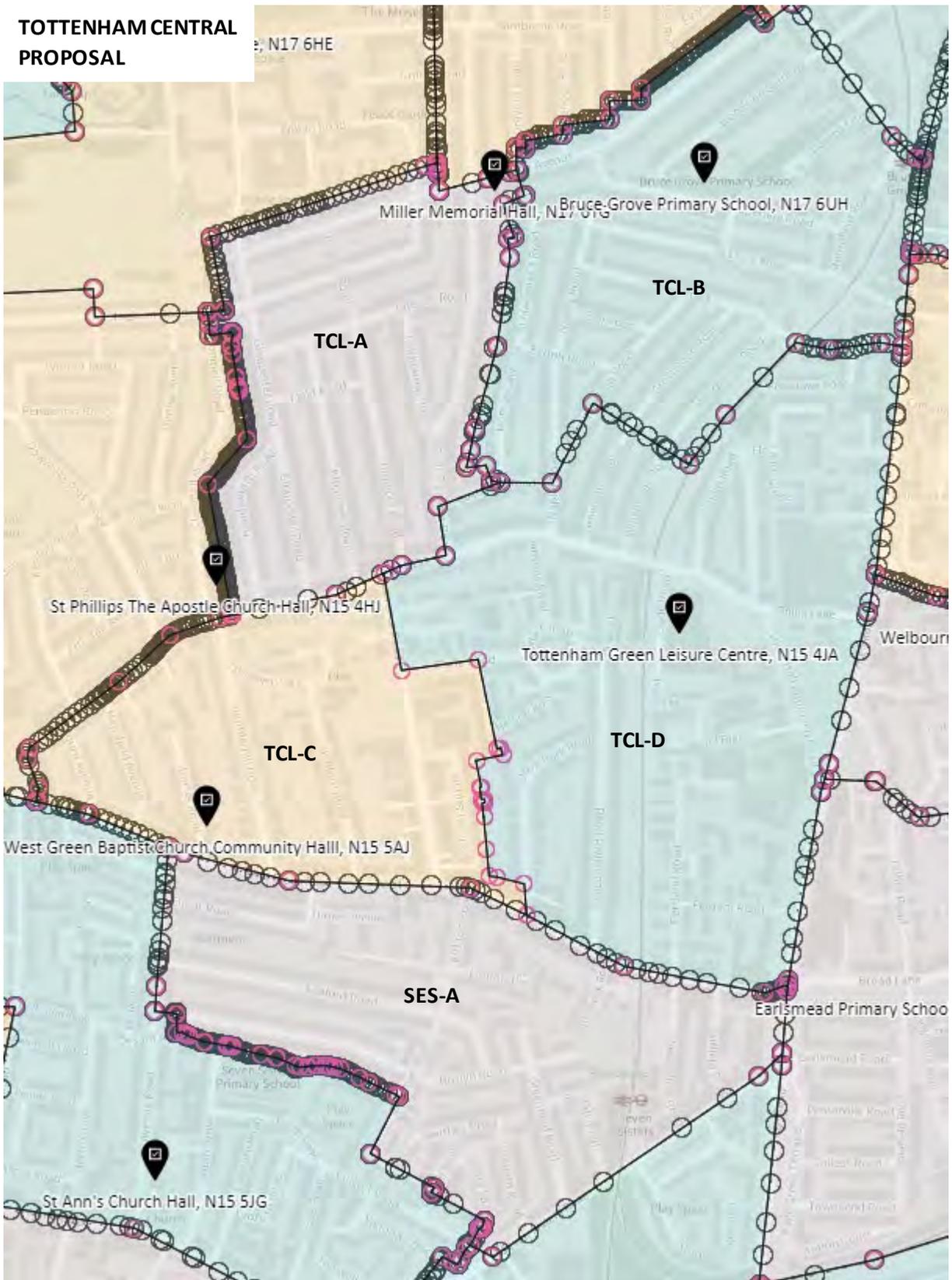
Returning Officer Comments for Tottenham Central Ward: This ward has a too large an electorate allocated to the polling place in TCL-D. This proposal addresses that issue by creating a new polling district and adding a further polling place. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation.

Returning Officer Comments for Seven Sisters Ward: SES-A does not currently have an allocated polling place within the ward boundary. The polling place currently allocated needs to be reassigned to the ward it is in. While it is preferred not to use portable buildings where this can be avoided, this is not possible in these circumstances. I support this proposal being presented to ward members and in the public consultation.

TOTTENHAM CENTRAL
As is



**TOTTENHAM CENTRAL
PROPOSAL**



4.5. Polling place refinements

The following issues have been identified in relation to a number of polling places

Venue (polling district code)	Comments	Returning Officer Comments
Alexandra Park Library (APK-B)	<p>This is the designated polling place on the polling scheme, but St Andrews Centre was used in its place in May 2022 as the library was undergoing refurbishment. These works are still ongoing – the St Andrews Centre will be used for any elections until December. A visit will be required before the library is used again</p> <p>Proposed – retain the library as the designated polling place and should an election be called before the renovations are completed, then request use of the St Andrews Centre</p>	<p>I support the proposal to retain Alexandra Park Library as the allocated polling place being presented in the public consultation.</p> <p>In the interim, while the renovation works are underway, the St Andrews Centre will be used as a temporary location</p>
Jackson's Lane/Highgate Library (HGH-C)	<p>Studio 5 in Jackson's Lane was used in May 2022 – the lighting in there is very dim and the doors cannot be propped open as they are fire doors. It was suggested using Highgate Library instead. The Library has just commenced renovations and will not be available, but it looked to be potentially suitable. A visit will be required before this starts being used. In response to the consultation last year, feedback was received from the ward councillors at the time and the manager of Jackson's Lane to continue to use the venue as a polling place, due to its function as a community space.</p> <p>Options for decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Jackson's Lane as the polling place and review following the completion of the renovation of Highgate Library 	<p>I support the proposal to move the polling place to Highgate Library being presented in the public consultation.</p> <p>In the interim, while the renovation works are underway, Jackson's Lane will continue to be used as a temporary location</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • move the designated polling place to the library and request the use of Jackson's Lane, if an election is called before the renovations are complete (this is the recommendation, subject to briefing the ward member on this) 	
All portables	Proposed - Further work to be done to make sure that the specification of the portable buildings is robust and ensures that the venues are as suitable as possible. Work to be done with Environment and Neighbourhood colleagues to plan and check the siting of these	I support the proposal to retain the four current portable buildings as there are no suitable alternatives available at present.
Newbury House (BGR-C)	<p>This is not an ideal location – the room is small and there are issues with access and staff facilities.</p> <p>The nearby church was not suitable when visited a number of years ago and has not responded to messages.</p> <p>Options for decision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • retain the use of Newbury House space and make it more accessible (recommended) • consider siting a portable building there 	I support the proposal to retain Newbury House and to ensure that it meets accessibility requirements
Irish Centre (BRC-B)	<p>This is currently under Council management but will shortly start use as an adults day care facility. Including its continued use as a polling place in the building lease has been requested</p> <p>Proposed – retain use by ensuring there is a clause in the lease</p>	I support the proposal to retain the Irish Centre as a polling place

5. Polling Station visits

There are a number of polling places that will be visited to clarify exactly which space is used, to look to see if it can be kept open if it is a school site and check for any adjustments required. This does not impact on the polling scheme as it will not change the designated polling place.

- St Mary's Primary School (HRN-C)
- Neighbourhood Resource Centre (NUP-C)
- Crowland Primary School (SOT-C)
- Holy Trinity Church (STG-B) Stroud Green Primary School (STG-C,STG-CT)
- Bruce Grove Primary School (TCL-B)
- Seven Sisters (SES-A)
- Bounds Green Primary School (BGR-A)
- Christ Church Crouch End (CEN-B)
- St Mark's Church (NOP-B)
- Milton Community Hall (WEG-C)
- St Michael's CE Primary School (HGH-B)
- Chestnuts Primary School (STA-B)

Appendix 1 – Working Approach from the 2021 review

- The aim was for 2000-3000 electors per polling station
 - This included postal voters, meaning around 1800-2500 in-person anticipated electors for each station
 - some districts will have multiple polling stations in the polling place
- Reasonable walking distance was assumed as 10-15 minutes, and distances aimed to account for topography
- A further aim was to minimise the use of schools:
 - Some schools are happy to be used and can either plan an inset day or have a separate space that can be used with minimal disruption
 - Where a school has to close, nearby alternatives were looked at
 - Finding an alternative space wasn't always possible so there were some schools that still needed to be used
- Generally, polling district boundaries were drawn along the centre of the road
- Where a venue was used, reasonable adjustments were applied to make it accessible where this was needed
- It was recognised that some of these districts might need to be revisited as a result of the outcome of the parliamentary ward Boundary Review which is due to report in July 2023