

Comisiwn Ffiniau a
Democratiaeth Leol
Cymru



Local Democracy and
Boundary Commission
For Wales

**REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES OF THE
COUNTY OF FLINTSHIRE – FLINT MOUNTAIN**

DRAFT PROPOSALS

LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES

REVIEW OF COMMUNITY BOUNDARIES OF THE COUNTY OF FLINTSHIRE – FLINT MOUNTAIN

DRAFT PROPOSALS

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The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Flintshire County Council have conducted a review of the community boundaries and community electoral arrangements under Section 55(2) and 57(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Wales) Act 1994 (the Act). In accordance with Section 55(2) of the Act Flintshire County Council have submitted a report to the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (the Commission) of their considerations for changes to a number of community boundaries in their area.
- 1.2. The purpose of the Council's review was to consider whether, in the interests of effective and convenient local government, changes to the present community boundaries should be proposed.
- 1.3. We have considered Flintshire County Council's report and proposals in accordance with Section 55(3) of the Act. As part of our considerations we have identified an issue with a particular area that we do not consider to have been satisfactorily addressed in the Council's report and recommendations. We have therefore given consideration to changes in respect of the Flint Mountain area of the Community of Flint.
- 1.4. We are seeking views on the three options we have identified for Flint Mountain. On receipt of these views we will consider the options and make final proposals. These proposals will be included with all our proposals in respect of the community changes suggested in the Flintshire County Council report.
- 1.5. Section 60 of the Act lays down procedural guidelines, which are to be followed in carrying out a review. In line with that guidance we are writing to the Town and Community Councils of Flint and Northop, the Member of Parliament for the local constituency, the Assembly Members for the area and other interested parties to inform them of our intention to conduct the review and to request their views. We will ask the Councils to display public notices. Notification of the start of the review and the 22 April 2015 closing date for representations to be made is to be placed on the websites of both the Commission and Flintshire County Council.

2. SUMMARY OF THE DRAFT PROPOSAL

- 2.1. The Commission is seeking further evidence in respect of the area known locally as Flint Mountain. A proposal has been made to separate Flint Mountain from the rest of the Trelawny ward of the Community of Flint and a suggested boundary for this area can be found on the map at page 4. The Commission is seeking views as to whether one of the three following options is appropriate for the area:
 - A** Flint Mountain is retained within the Trelawny ward of the Community of Flint;
 - B** Flint Mountain is created as a separate ward of the Community of Flint; or,
 - C** Flint Mountain is created as a new ward and transferred to the Community of Northop.

- 2.2. It is the view of the Commission that the electorate of Flint Mountain is not of sufficient size to form an effective community area.

3. REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE DRAFT PROPOSAL

- 3.1. We received representations from Town Councillor Nigel Williams (Flint - Trelawny), and a resident of Flint Mountain. We considered both of these representations carefully before we formulated our proposals. Details of these representations can be found at Appendix A.
- 3.2. The resident of Flint Mountain wrote asking the Commission to request that Flint Mountain be removed from Flint Town. This resident described how the settlement and surrounding area of Flint Mountain is of a rural character which has become out of step with the demands and needs of the more urban Flint Town. This disparity has led to a perceived erosion of democracy for the residents of Flint Mountain.
- 3.3. The resident was of the opinion that Flint Mountain would be of sufficient size to represent itself at community level and then would also be better fitted to join with the more rural-aligned Northop Community.
- 3.4. Councillor Williams wrote in support of this argument citing that his observations are that the needs of Flint Mountain are often overridden by those of the urban-centred bias towards Flint Town.

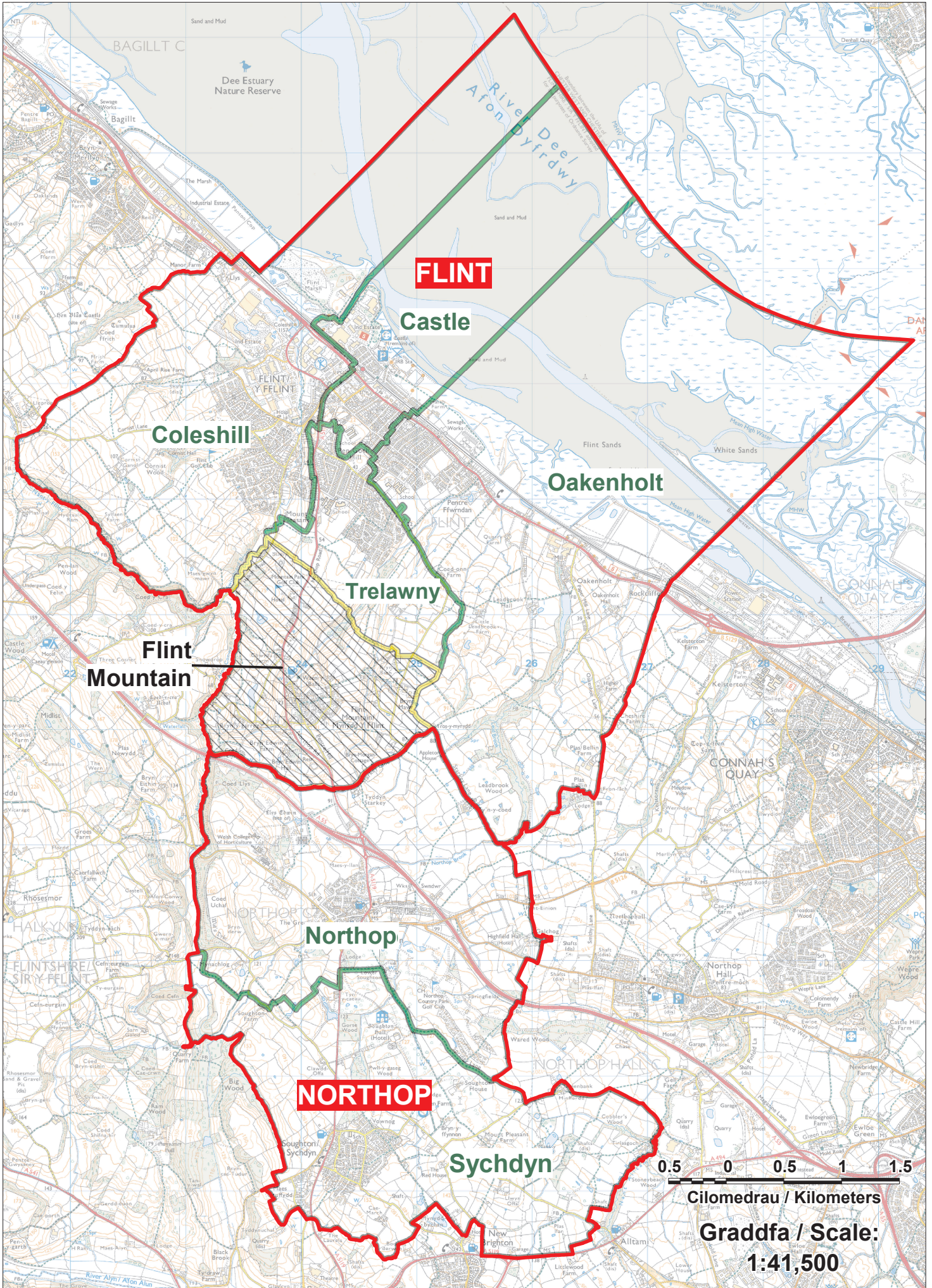
4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1. The proposal from representations is that the settlement of Flint Mountain and the surrounding area be transferred from Flint Town Council to Northop Community Council. The Flint Mountain settlement in question comprises 286 properties and 540 electors.
- 4.2. The Community of Flint is currently divided, for community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Castle, Coleshill, Oakenholt and Trelawny. The area known as Flint Mountain presently resides in the Trelawny ward of Flint Town Council.
- 4.3. The Community of Northop is currently divided, for community electoral purposes, into the community wards of Northop and Sychdyn.
- 4.4. The Commission considered the representations and has looked in detail at the area in question. It would appear to the Commission that there is some merit to the argument that Flint Mountain is a distinct area within the Town of Flint, with a separate, more rural character, than the more urban, town, wards of Castle and Coleshill.

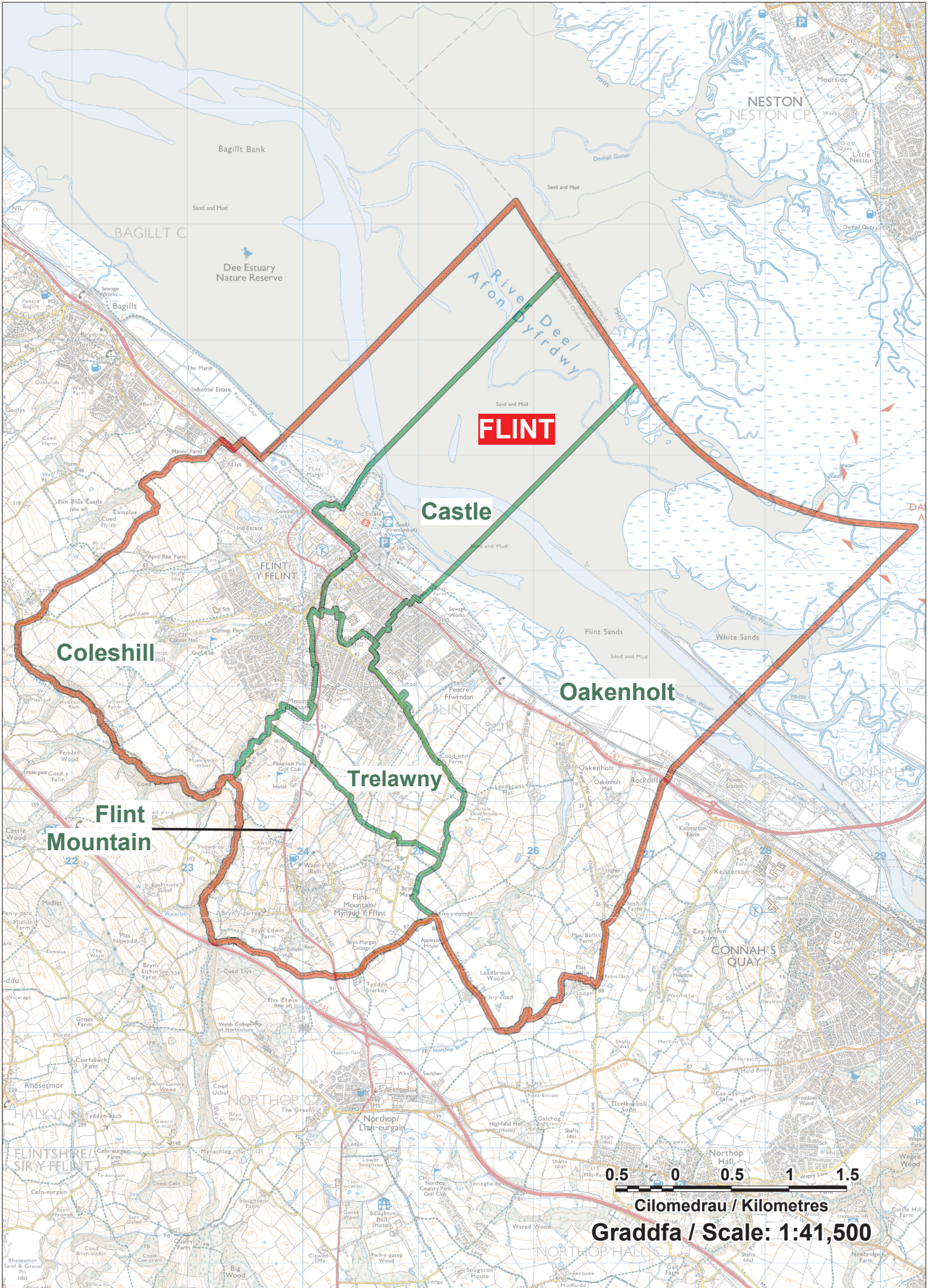
- 4.5. However, the Commission does not feel it has sufficient evidence from the local community and town councils, interested parties and members of the public to propose a change to the community arrangements. After deliberation, it was agreed by the Commission that a limited public consultation be held covering the Flint Mountain settlement on the question of whether existing arrangements should continue, or whether Flint Mountain should become more accountable for its own affairs by changing those arrangements.
- 4.6. As mentioned earlier, the Commission has identified three possible options which seem appropriate and which would reflect our obligation to ensure effective and convenient local government for community and town council arrangements:
- A** Flint Mountain is retained within the Trelawny ward of the Community of Flint (the existing arrangement);
 - B** Flint Mountain is created as a separate community ward of the Community of Flint; or,
 - C** Flint Mountain is created as a new community ward and transferred to the Community of Northop.
- 4.7. It is the view of the Commission that the electorate of Flint Mountain is not of sufficient size to form an effective community area.
- 4.8. The Commission is seeking views and evidence from those concerned as to whether one of these options is appropriate for the Flint Mountain area only. The default view of the Commission is to retain the existing arrangements (Option A) if it does not receive sufficient evidence for either Option B or Option C as a preference for the parties concerned.
- 4.9. The following three pages show maps of each Option under consideration.



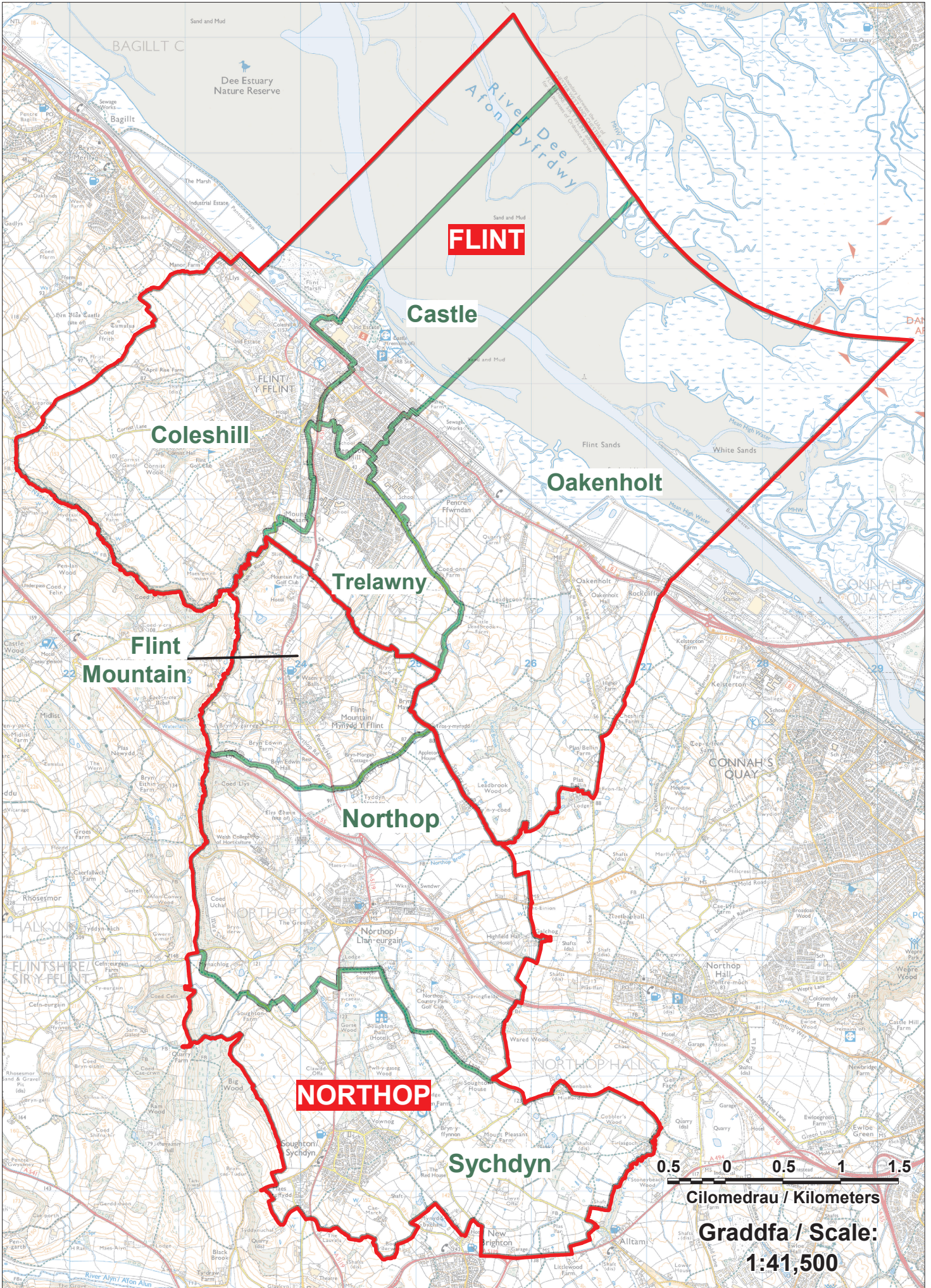
OPTION A - EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS



OPTION B - PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS



OPTION C - PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS



5. CONSEQUENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS

5.1. In considering the change to the community boundaries it was also necessary for us to take account of the consequential effects on the electoral arrangements for community councils and the principal authority, which would result from these changes. This section of our report details our proposals for consequential changes to the electoral arrangements. We would also welcome comments on this aspect of our report.

Community Council Electoral Arrangements

5.2. The present community arrangements (Option **A**) are shown in the table below:

Community	Ward	2014 Electors	Community Councillors	Electors per Councillor
Flint Town Council	Castle	1,518	4	380
	Coleshill	3,138	5	628
	Oakenholt	2,191	4	548
	Trelawny	2,823	5	565
	Total	9,670	18	537

Northop Community Council	Northop	1,038	6	173
	Sychdyn	1,464	7	209
	Total	2,502	13	192

5.3. If it were determined that Option **B** were the preferred proposal, we are required to consider the consequential changes to the community electoral arrangements. Under this option, we would propose that the current total of 18 Flint Town councillors is maintained with the revised Trelawny ward being represented by four members instead of five and one member representing the new Flint Mountain ward. The new arrangements would therefore be:

Community	Ward	Current			Proposed		
		2014 Electors	Community Councillors	Electors per Councillor	2014 Electors	Community Councillors	Electors per Councillor
Flint Town Council	Castle	1,518	4	380	1,518	4	380
	Coleshill	3,138	5	628	3,138	5	628
	Flint Mountain	Not applicable			540	1	540
	Oakenholt	2,191	4	548	2,191	4	548
	Trelawny	2,823	5	565	2,283	4	571
	Total	9,670	18	537	9,670	18	537
Northop Community Council	Northop	1,038	6	173	1,038	6	173
	Sychdyn	1,464	7	209	1,464	7	209
	Total	2,502	13	192	2,502	13	192

- 5.4. If it were determined that Option C were the preferred proposal, we are required to consider the consequential changes to the community electoral arrangements. Under this option, we would propose that the current total of 18 Flint Town councillors is reduced to 17 with the reduction taking place in the Trelawny ward.
- 5.5. We would also propose that the current total of 13 Northop Community councillors is increased to 14. The new Flint Mountain ward would have two community councillors, with a reduction of one community councillor in the Northop ward.
- 5.6. These changes reflect the current arrangements by maintaining a broadly similar ratio of electors per community councillor as possible within the communities involved. We therefore propose the following arrangements:

Community	Ward	Current			Proposed		
		2014 Electors	Community Councillors	Electors per Councillor	2014 Electors	Community Councillors	Electors per Councillor
Flint Town Council	Castle	1,518	4	380	1,518	4	380
	Coleshill	3,138	5	628	3,138	5	628
	Oakenholt	2,191	4	548	2,191	4	548
	Trelawny	2,823	5	565	2,283	4	571
	Total	9,670	18	537	9,130	17	537

Northop Community Council	Flint Mountain	Not applicable			540	2	270
	Northop	1,038	6	173	1,038	5	208
	Sychdyn	1,464	7	209	1,464	7	209
	Total	2,502	13	192	3,042	14	217

County Council Electoral Arrangements

- 5.7. We do not propose any changes to County Council electoral arrangements. Any changes to electoral arrangements that may be necessary will be considered at the next electoral review for the County of Flintshire.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 6.1. We wish to express our gratitude to Flintshire County Council for their assistance and to all persons and bodies who made representations to us.

7. RESPONSES TO THIS REPORT

7.1. All observations on this draft report should be sent to:

The Chief Executive
Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales
Hastings House
Fitzalan Court
Cardiff
CF24 0BL

not later than 22 April 2015.

8. THE NEXT STEPS

8.1. When we have considered the comments made to us in response to this draft report, we shall submit our recommendations to the Welsh Government in the form of a report and proposals. It will then fall to the Welsh Government, if it thinks fit, to implement our recommendations either with or without modifications.

Mr OWEN WATKIN OBE DL (Chair)

Mr CERI STRADLING (Deputy Chair)

Mr DAVID POWELL (Member)

Mr STEVE HALSALL (Chief Executive)

28 January 2015

REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S FINAL PROPOSALS.

1. **Councillor Nigel Williams - Flint Town Council** wrote on 27 June 2014 in support of proposals from a resident of Flint Mountain that the settlement and surrounding area of Flint Mountain be moved from the Trelawny ward of Flint Town Council. Councillor Williams spoke of a democratic need that ought to be addressed and also of the difference in character between the more urban Flint Town and the generally rural Flint Mountain. Councillor Williams observed the clear and historic links that Flint Mountain has with the neighbouring Community of Northop - which is itself clearly a rural area.
2. **A resident of Flint Mountain** wrote on 27 June 2014 asking the Commission to accept her appeal that Flint Mountain be removed from the influence of Flint Town.

The resident provided statistical evidence from across Flintshire in support of their proposal to be a separate community ward, citing other community wards with a similar population to Flint Mountain. Further quotations are made from the recent census returns for the area as well as proposed planning for a series of housing projects which are set to increase the electorate in the future. The resident argues that this increase would mean that the electorate of the Flint Mountain area exceeds that of other areas which enjoy separate representation at community - and even sometimes at county level.

The resident goes on to describe the Flint Mountain area's facilities and amenities, describing it as a rural village. The resident states that Flint Mountain has always been part of the Northop Parish and also states that the local primary schools for Flint Mountain, Northop, and Sychdyn hold an annual sports day together and have no interaction with Flint Town's primary schools. The resident then describes Flint Town as an industrial town, describing its urban features and amenities.

The resident next describes their reasons for requesting Flint Mountain to be separate from Flint Town:

- Concerns about adequate county councillor representation.
- Concerns about adequate representation on Flint Town Council with Flint Mountain being one-fifth the population of the ward they are in, and 1/18th of the population of Flint Town.
- As a village, they have more in common with the villages of Northop and Sychdyn and would have a more equal representation on Northop Community Council.

The resident then expresses their concerns in the process of Flintshire County Council's community review itself and argues that it breached the review principles in not considering their request for Flint Mountain to be separated from Flint Town.

The resident goes on to state that Flint Town Council should not object to the change as it would have little consequence to them. The resident states the remainder of Flint is growing and developing, with large new developments in other wards. The resident argues that this is no place for a rural village to also be represented.

