

BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND

PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

2018 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES IN ENGLAND

HELD AT

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL,
CIVIC CENTRE, CARLISLE CA3 8QG**

ON

**TUESDAY 18 OCTOBER 2016
DAY TWO**

Before:

Mr Neil Ward, The Lead Assistant Commissioner

**Transcribed from audio by W B Gurney & Sons LLP
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At 11.00 am:

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good morning. Thank you for coming to this second day of the public hearing in Carlisle on the Boundary Commission's initial proposals for revised parliamentary constituencies for the North West of England. My name is Neil Ward; I have been appointed as the Lead Assistant Commissioner by the Boundary Commission in order to do two things. One is to chair these public hearings across the North West; the second one is, with a couple of colleagues – Nicholas Elliot and Graeme Clark – to take on board all the representations that are made both orally at these hearings and also in writing over the next six weeks or so and to consider between us whether or not we think it is appropriate to recommend any changes to the Boundary Commission to the initial proposals that they have published.

It goes without saying, I think within that, that Assistant Commissioners have had no say in the drafting of these proposals. We received the proposals the same time as the members of the public received them and our job is, in a sense, to act as honest broker between the public and the Boundary Commission to try and shape the best outcome for, in this case, the North West of England, but across the country as a whole.

It is now just after 11 o'clock; we have just started. We were going to sit from 9 o'clock until 5 o'clock. We have not started yet because we have not really had the opportunity to make any progress today. We will probably run until 5 o'clock today but the timings will be flexible. Those of you who have been to previous hearings will know that we cannot guarantee when speakers will come. We have a number of them booked and we will try to take them at the time they are due to speak. If anyone turns up who wishes to speak we will give them the opportunity so to do.

There are a couple of rules on process. This is not a debating forum, despite the room we are in; it is a place in order to make representations so that I can understand the points that are being made. It is not a place to argue with or debate with the Boundary Commission; it is not a place to debate amongst ourselves. It is certainly not a place to make political mileage and political points; they carry little or no weight at all with me in that particular context.

Typically we give 10 minute slots to anyone who wishes to speak. In practice often they take less than that. If anyone needs to take slightly longer we will allow that. We have maps which we will put up on the board to try and aid the discussion as best as possible. There is a laser pointer which is simple to use which could point to the map if that is easier in order to help people in the room understand a point.

For those who have not been here before, you will see that we have a camera at the back and microphones. These hearings are being filmed; they are being filmed because this is a matter of record as part of the consultation period. In the same way that anyone who submits a piece of written evidence has to give their name and

address, so here we will ask any speakers to give their name and full address and then proceed with the discussion. At the end of giving a representation, we will allow the opportunity for anyone to make points of clarification on anything that has been said in that discussion. As I have already said, this is not a place for debate about that so there will be an opportunity for representations.

Just a few domestics. There are toilets outside just to the side. There was a fire alarm test earlier so I am not expecting any other. If a fire alarm does go off it will probably be the real thing. I am told that if we follow the green fire exits signs to the visitors meeting area which is located in the car park adjoining the Civic Centre at meeting point H, the guys at the door will have a plan they will show us how to get there. There are not many of us so we will probably be able to spot if we are all there when we get out but there is a need for us to just check and we will take recognition of who is here; we will take our register with us and we will check. If anyone has mobility issues and the alarm goes off, please let us know and we have arrangements to make for that.

I have two speakers here for this morning, Ms Sheelagh Delaney and Ms Alice Bondi. Ms Bondi, would you come to this seat to my left; the microphone is on. Would you give your name and address and then proceed to tell us whatever it is you think we should take on board.

MS BONDI: My name is Alice Bondi; my address is Low Blackburn Bank, Leadgate, Alston CA9 3BU. I want to talk about the problems that the change from being part of Penrith and the Border to being part of Penrith and Solway would entail for the area known as Alston Moor, which is the further eastern part of the Penrith and Solway proposed constituency.

As things stand as part of Penrith and the Border, we are linked to two other areas by road, that is Brampton and Penrith. The roads to both of these are fairly narrow for A roads, they are winding and difficult and particularly the road to Penrith can be blocked by snow in winter. We are an isolated rural area; we are very separate from anywhere else. In the proposed new constituency of Penrith and Solway we will be connected to only one part of it, and that is Penrith, and the constituency as a whole will have a chunk of the Eden Valley and the Solway Plain. We are at 1000 feet and upwards in the North Pennines; we are an entirely different area. We also will be about 60 miles from the far side of the constituency. Our current MP, Rory Stewart, has done a valiant job of trying to cover the whole of Penrith and the Border but this constituency I think would defeat even his work. We are so different from anywhere else, I do not see how we can be meaningfully included in an MP's work for Penrith and Solway. We also will have serious problems in terms of communication with other parts of the constituency. I therefore think that this seriously needs to be re-thought.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Have you given any thought yourself to where we might best link Alston Moor?

MS BONDI: The thing that would make most sense I know is not possible, which is that we simply become part of Northumberland and get linked to other parts of the North Pennines. It is a historical anomaly that we are part of Cumbria and put in this position. However, if Brampton is going to go to Carlisle then we have problems. If Brampton was not being moved into the Carlisle constituency that would certainly help us and also if it was not going to stretch an area that is so little connected to us, the far side of the Solway Plain, it might as well be on another planet as far we are concerned. We have greater connection with the southern part of Eden, which is now being moved to a different constituency.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You have mentioned the difficulties of the roads and desolation in the winter and the like. Can you illustrate for me a bit further what sort of problems in relation to parliamentary constituencies you would feel you and, I guess, fellow members of Alston Moor would feel?

MS BONDI: I think it is partly, quite straightforwardly, that since the road to Penrith is frequently closed in the winter, no MP is going to come anywhere near us, let alone be able to run a surgery on Alston Moor for large chunks of the year.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any points anyone wishes to make?

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: (North West Conservatives) Robert Atkins, representing the North West Conservatives. I just want to be clear. I know Alston reasonably well having been there when I was a member of the European Parliament on occasions. In terms of its present location, is it not just as difficult to get to any parts of---

MS BONDI: No. No, because we link to Brampton on the all-weather road.

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: How would that change?

MS BONDI: Brampton is not going to be part of the new constituency.

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: I understand that, but in terms of shops, communication, that will not change.

MS BONDI: That is not what I am talking about. I am talking about the constituency issue, about our connection to an MP and an MP's connection to us and our connection to the rest of the constituency.

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Currently what happens in relation to the existing constituency, which runs north to south effectively?

MS BONDI: Our MP does make it up to Alston for surgery sometimes and we are able to go and attend surgeries in both Brampton and Penrith.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Is that where the existing surgeries are for the MP, do you know?

MS BONDI: Those are the ones I know about; there will also be others in South Eden and presumably in Wigton.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, Ms Bondi. Would Sheelagh Delaney be ready to speak? Thank you for coming along this morning. Again, if you would state your name and full address and then please begin.

MS DELANEY: I am Sheelagh Delaney of Ivy Cottage, Hesket Newmarket, which is closer to Wigton. I would like to discuss again the boundaries of the constituency. I am actually secretary of the Constituency Labour Party in that area and obviously I appreciate Alice Bondi's comments. I think, as Alice says, possibly Alston Moor, its contact with the constituency would be far better probably in Northumberland, but I do not think that that is within the bounds of what you have put forward. From our point of view, that is its closest contact, really. At times, especially when we see what is going to happen now to Penrith and Solway, you do feel a little like, "Where do we put that?" "Well, let's put it in the old Penrith and the Border constituency.

So whilst you can see the logic of going to Brampton, going in with Carlisle, then to stretch those into Solway and the Solway Firth seems to us to stretch a boundary too far. I know it is based on numbers but we also consider it as what is possible and what are your links with people in that area? Our links lie within the rural area but there is a stretch too far to the east and I think there is some of that. I support Alice on that, but I think if I supported Alice I would say that Alston Moor would be in the Northumberland area because I think that is where its natural links lie.

I think Alice is quite right about the road situation. As you know, the funding to county councils is diminishing and with that go services. An issue for us in the winter period is that roads are not always de-iced, they are not salted and it is bus routes that are salted. Alice is quite right when she says that the routes that are easier to take are those with the bus routes and where they will be salted. If they wish to see their MP then it is quite difficult if those roads are not salted and the same applies to our area where we are in Hesket Newmarket. Certain of those roads are salted so we do link with Wigton, but to get to the Solway Firth is extremely difficult at that time of year. We did wonder whether we should bring Dalston within our bounds, because that area is salted and it is a shopping link to us and it is an area that our children do go to school.

Our children go to school in Wigton and our children go to school in Dalston. Those are our two hubs really and our hubs are not really out into the Solway Firth. The doctor's surgery in Dalston has successfully recently appealed against NHS England to state that Dalston is a rural area. We think as a rural area it actually fits in our constituency and it is within the bounds and it is within a good travel to work area, travel to school area and an area that is accessible within the winter period.

The other thing is, if we are going to have Alston Moor within our constituency we did wonder about Crosby Ravensworth and Long Marton, whether they should be part of the constituency. Effectively, that is what I would like to say to you really, that the bounds of the boundaries have been stretched too far really and if it is a numbers game then perhaps you need to pass back to the government that perhaps the electoral registers are not up-to-date and there are more people in different areas, but also you cannot just base an MP's constituency on numbers; it has to be what the service is to those people. I think that is what we are trying to say to you today.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. I understand the concerns you have about numbers but that is the law these days. I think we are absolutely constrained by the numbers and we are constrained by the data that we are allowed to use in this particular instance, which is the December 2015 Electoral Register, which may be under or over stated and we have had discussions about that.

Can I just pick up on your last remark before that when you were looking at Crosby Ravensworth and Long Marton? Was the implication of that that you think they should push away?

MS DELANEY: Or perhaps come with us because they link with Appleby.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: They are definitely in the proposed constituency for Penrith and Solway, but Appleby-in-Westmorland is not because that links down to the south lakes. The trouble with Cumbria, as I know from previous experience, the size and geography is the absolute constraints on this. What I am wrestling with is a few well-populated areas and large swathes of low-populated areas and to bring them together to create something in the region of 75,000 requires an enormous geographical range.

MS DELANEY: You can drop it closer to 70,000, could you not?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We could get it down to 71,000. Penrith and Solway is 72,000 already. We have got quite a lot of constraints there but I understand the points you are making very clearly. Are there any points anyone would like to raise with Ms Delaney? (No) Thank you very much for coming in and helping us.

Good morning, Mr Whiteside. There is an apology in order because I gather you made the journey to see us yesterday. My apologies; we had adjourned for the evening. I did not know you were coming; had I known, I would have made the point of staying on myself to see you, but we had spent probably three-quarters of the day without any business going through the room here and we took a judgment call which proved to be wrong in the case that we were not going to get any further. I apologise for that but I am very pleased that you made it along today. Do you think you are ready to speak?

MR WHITESIDE: Yes, I am.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Would you like to come forward to the microphone? We are recording this for the record and making a film, so I would be grateful if you could give your name and full address and then please proceed.

MR WHITESIDE: Certainly. Before I do, I will accept your apology. I am aware there was a problem with the booking system. I had actually telephoned the Boundary Commission in London to try to check the situation and they knew I was coming at six o'clock but obviously the message did not reach you. I will pass your apology on to a colleague who was with me.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: My apologies to both of you.

MR WHITESIDE: That is accepted. My name is Christopher Whiteside. I am a Copeland resident, an officer of Copeland Conservative Association and Cumbria Area Conservatives, a former Copeland councillor and a former Conservative Parliamentary and Mayoral candidate for Copeland. I am here to support the Boundary Commission's proposals. Obviously the geography of Cumbria, particularly the number of lakes and mountains, make it difficult to assemble five constituencies with a common interest and there is a limited number of ways you can do it.

The first proposals in the last parliament were a classic example of the problem including, as they did, a Copeland and Windermere seat where the two main areas had the highest mountain and the deepest lake in England between them and the only direct route between those two running over Hardknott Pass, the alternative being a two-hour journey around the lakes and mountains. It makes far more sense, as in the revised proposals and in the Boundary Commission for England's present ones, to put the main West Cumbrian centres of Whitehaven and Workington together. Despite a historic degree of what you might politely call friendly rivalry, there is a significant degree of common interest. Carlisle constituency, coterminous with Carlisle City Council is obviously sensible. There is historic precedent for a Penrith and Solway constituency, such as the late Willie Whitelaw used to represent. The main issue and the main thing I wanted to talk about were the borders of the Whitehaven and Workington constituency and the Barrow constituency. It is worth mentioning that Ulverston is a unit and does look to Barrow much more than the rest of South Lakeland District Council does. My

colleagues in Barrow certainly are of the view that Ulverston as a unit should be in with Barrow and Furness, but that still leaves the Barrow and Furness seat not big enough so something else has to go in with it. There is what you might call a Furness Peninsula's Community based along the south-west coast of Copeland and running along the west coast road, ie the A595 and the A590 between Barrow, Millom and Sellafield, with people from Barrow travelling to work at Sellafield and also people from Millom travelling both south to Barrow to work at British Aerospace and north to Sellafield to work there. Indeed, for that reason the Boundary Commission's previous proposals included the area up to and including Seascale with the Barrow constituency.

The present proposals do have the advantage of a strong geographical border at Ravenglass and if you look at the places you could put this, the border between Bootle and Millom Without would make much less sense. The mountain Black Combe is to the east of the area where the main strip of population and the A595 actually runs. Ravenglass Estuary and the mountains with it are a possible boundary. The other possibility that there would be that you could move the boundary north and incorporate Seascale as the previous boundaries did, which I believe would work in terms of the numbers. There is definitely a case for doing that and I would not oppose it. It would put more of the south-west coast community that I referred to into the same constituency which is particularly important because issues of that road and transport arrangements along it, particularly things like the issue of de-trunking, have been a very important cross-party political issue affecting that area and having one Member of Parliament responsible for that route in his or her constituency would have some advantages.

That change would be the only change to the Boundary Commission's current proposals that I would consider supporting, but I do believe that the proposals are very strong as they stand.

The other comment I would make is that there has been some debate about the name for the seat which includes Barrow. Barrow and Furness Peninsulas has been suggested as an alternative. As I have mentioned, there is a Furness Peninsula identity and you can even see the expression Furness Peninsula on some of the road signs in the area. Barrow and Millom would be also an alternative name for that constituency which has been suggested.

Those are the points I would want to make, sir. I would be very happy to answer any questions.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. Can I just check, did I consider you to be ambivalent between whether or not Sellafield came down with Barrow or stayed to the north? You said you would support either.

MR WHITESIDE: I think there is a strong case for either proposal, yes. If you are looking for the strongest geographical boundary then you would stick with the present proposals. If you were trying to put the whole of the south-west Cumbria community of interest, particularly the area of South Copeland which runs along the A595, then you would put Seascale into the Barrow constituency. I think there is a very strong case for doing that. I worded my comments the way I did because I do not want to undermine the fact that I am making the point that I strongly support the Commission's proposals as they stand, but that alternative proposal of putting Seascale in, I know would have some support in Seascale and there is a strong case for it.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Would you also put Gosforth in? I see a line running right through the plant.

MR WHITESIDE: I argued for that at the previous Boundary Commission's proposals. The reason I am not arguing for it now is because it is difficult to make the numbers work as they stand now without carving up Ulverston. As I have said, Ulverston is a natural community which it would be very silly to carve up and you would have to do that if you tried to make the numbers work and improve Gosforth. I do not think I could support that for that reason.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Just a minor point to pick up, you talk about the Boundary Commission's previous proposals encompassed this. In reality, the Boundary Commission did not get as far as making final proposals because Parliament had pulled the plug by then but the Assistant Commissioners have had many proposals.

MR WHITESIDE: To be absolutely clear, I was referring to the proposals at the second stage, as revised as a result of all the public consultations which came in.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Can I check if anyone else has any points? Sir Robert Atkins.

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: Thank you. Sir Robert Atkins, representing the North-West Conservatives. Can I be clear, Chris, that you think that Seascale and Bootle have an identity of interest on either side of the River Mite?

MR WHITESIDE: Absolutely, Sir Robert. There is a community in that area. The way the local authority works, it has neighbourhood forums and neighbourhood activities which have a lot of public support and which work all the way along the line of the A595. There is a great deal of interaction between the Seascale area and Bootle. Seascale acts as a northern hub for the Bootle area.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Are there any other points? (No) Thank you very much; that was very helpful indeed.

MR WHITESIDE: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We now have one of our periodic breaks looming. We are not due to have another speaker until 3.50 this afternoon, but that is not to say – as I know now to my cost – that people might arrive at almost any time. What I am going to propose, with apologies, is that I am going to adjourn until 1 o'clock and see if anybody comes. Apologies to those who were hoping to have a lively morning here. If there is no-one here we will break for lunch and then we will probably have a substantial break to something like 3.30 when we have a group of speakers. I am going to adjourn now until 1 o'clock.

Time not noted

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon, I see we have a bit more business so rather than sit here for long, I am so excited and I think we should press on with the next speakers. I gather that both Mr Lishman and Mr Devenish wish to speak. Mr Lishman, do you want to come first? Thank you. I know you know the procedure but for Mr Devenish's benefit, we are filming and recording the presentations so we ask you to give your name and full address and then proceed with the presentation. If there are then any points of clarification, we will take them at the end.

MR LISHMAN: Thank you. My name is Neville Lishman; I live at 47 Longlands Road, Carlisle, CA3 9AE. Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I would like to agree with the proposals as they have been proposed by the Boundary Commission on this occasion for a few reasons. As I am a Carlisle resident, I would like to focus on Carlisle. Carlisle City Council has the correct numbers for it to be coterminous with one MP. Currently there are two MPs who look after the Carlisle City area. The current Penrith and the Border MP actually has work in three local authority areas. These proposals that you recommend put Carlisle with one MP and Penrith and the Border, which becomes Penrith and Solway, for two local areas, Eden and Allerdale (as opposed to Eden, Carlisle and Allerdale as is currently the case). It reduces the number of local authorities that the MPs have to deal with, which can only be beneficial for working practices. On the flip side, down in the bottom of the county in Barrow, it goes from two local authorities to three local authorities but it would be difficult to increase Barrow any other way than going north up towards the Ravenglass, Seascale area. So I support the Boundary Commission's proposals for that.

I would just like to make reference to the Dalston site which I know there has been reference for it to be removed out of the Carlisle constituency. Dalston, if you look on the map, that bit where it says Dalston is a fairly rural area (indicating) but when you come to the line that borders onto the city of Upperby, Currock and the wards there, there is much interlink between the Dalston ward and the Carlisle constituency. If you take three points of places that are actually in Dalston ward, you would actually

associate them with Carlisle or Eden Valley Hospice. Everybody thinks of Eden Valley Hospice being in Carlisle but it is actually in the Dalston ward. Carlisle racecourse, after its name, is in the Dalston ward. The Nestlé plant, a major employer for Carlisle people, is in the Dalston ward. You come off the motorway at junction 42 for Carlisle south; junction 42 is in the Dalston ward. So there are many, many links, just landmarks within Dalston ward that you associate with Carlisle but on top of that we have building work in Yewdale to the west of the city which wraps round into Dalston. There are streets that, because of where the boundary is, the buildings have not really taken into account where the boundaries are. Yewdale finishes, Dalston starts. You do not know as it is the same street.

There is another example of where the buildings are is Parklands Estate, the Garlands Ward, it is about there (indicating) in between Wetheral, Harraby and Dalston, that little bit there. To access the Parklands Estate, you have to drive through it along Cumwhinton Road which is in Harraby. You turn at the roundabout and you go up into Garlands Road which is Dalston. You then go into the main part of the Parklands Estate which again is Dalston but there are three polling districts in that estate: there is OH, EE and RH (OH is Dalston, EE Harraby and RH is Wetheral). That estate, which is a fairly substantial estate, has three polling districts, three wards, so in effect that area is currently represented by eight councillors. Ripping Dalston out of Carlisle, you could not get to the Harraby part of the Wetheral part of that estate without driving through what would be Penrith and the Solway.

I cannot see any sense in taking Dalston out of Carlisle in terms of the city council representations, for the MPs and for the examples I have mentioned. That is all I would like to say about Dalston.

On another note, I sat through the hearing yesterday and I heard representations about the Barrow constituency, about the drive times to and from Bootle from various areas. Out of curiosity I went on the AA Route Finder last night and from Workington, which is the mid-town on the new proposed Workington and Whitehaven constituency, to Bootle, it was 51 minutes via the AA Route Finder and from Barrow to Bootle it was again 51 minutes on the AA Route Finder.

That is all I have to say, thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much indeed; thank you for doing the homework for us. I have no particular points. Does anyone have any points of clarification? [No] Thank you very much indeed. We will hear from Mr Devenish. Could you introduce yourself and give your address and then proceed.

MR DEVENISH: My name is James Devenish; I live at 6 Went Meadows Close, Dearham, CA15 7HN. The Borough Council of Allerdale, the current constituency

would be Workington and under the Boundary Commission changes it would be in Penrith and Solway.

I am sorry I am damp for the cameras, by the way; it is raining quite a lot, which is the want in Cumbria, of which I am very thankful, which is why it is green and beautiful of course.

I just wanted to speak really to support the Boundary Commission's proposals. I think it is something that we have to accept that with a growing and moving population this is something that we have to do from time to time, to make sure that seats are fair and evenly distributed. I would recognise that whichever party is in power at the time it is something that we need to do from time to time and the time has come to do it now. I find it very strange that, if I come to the A66 at the moment and I start at Penrith, I am in Penrith and the Border. If I drive to Keswick where I work, I am in Copeland. If I then go further down the A66 I come to Cockermouth which is Workington and then I come down to where I live in Dearham which is in Workington. We go to an Anglican church which is in Whitehaven which is in Copeland. I find myself in three different constituencies in the space of one car drive fairly regularly. I work in Keswick, the MP is Jamie Reed; I live in Cockermouth, it is Sue Hayman. It is quite confusing, I would say, as it is today.

I would also say that there is a big difference between the rural areas and urban areas, especially in Cumbria. I do not feel that the rural areas are served at all, I would argue, by the councils and by the parliamentary constituencies. Therefore, I fully support the combining of rural areas into a seat which can talk well to that. Penrith and Solway I believe make sense because I believe it will provide better representation for the rural areas which I do not think are well represented at the moment. We see it in expenditure at council level. I know this is parliamentary constituencies but where it is easy to say that the majority of money raised goes to the town centres because there is a huge difference between rural and urban.

I would support it from the point of view of fairness. I think it is fair when it comes to numbers but I think it is a better representation and therefore people who live in the rural areas will be better served by the Boundary Commission as it is proposed rather than this strange thing, for example, what is the difference between Keswick and Cockermouth? Why one in Copeland? Why one in Workington? There is no sense to that apart from the fact that somebody drew the dog legs as it was before. I welcome the Boundary Commission's changes because I think it brings clarity and I think a more even distribution of numbers. I would full support if from my own personal experience. That is all I wanted to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. We heard earlier – you were not here unfortunately – about the disparate nature of the right-hand side of the constituency from the left-hand side, ie Penrith from Solway. Alston Moor against

Crummock, what might they have in common and how could one person represent both of them. I am just wondering what your thoughts might be, ie anywhere on the far extreme to anywhere on the left.

MR DEVENISH: I have seen this and I studied it at the time. I would say that they have a lot in common because they represent similar rural constituencies in geographical concerns but also in the makeup of the communities, which is small towns, small hamlets. I think my point is that that is well represented. There are obviously centres of the community in that, in the sense that you have Penrith as the main one, Keswick and some of the towns as well, but largely I would describe it as a rural constituency and I do think those people need to be represented well. I actually see that people who live around Hartside, Long Martin, would have a lot in common geographically, even though it is a different side of the community, it is a very similar community and therefore the concerns that, for example, a farmer might have on the left are similar concerns that a farmer would have on the right. How is that well served by a town-heavy constituency.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Where would the market towns be? Where would people take their cattle to market or milk?

MR DEVENISH: Obviously Penrith is the biggest, then you have Keswick, which is the tourist market town, which has a completely different feel. You have Cockermouth and then I would say you have the smaller towns which I know well in that whole region.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. I have no other comments. Are there any other points anyone would like to raise? (No) Thank you very much for coming; we appreciate it. Thank you very much for both of those presentations. We will adjourn now for lunch; we will adjourn until 2.30.

After the luncheon adjournment

Time Noted: 2.30 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon everyone. We agreed to resume at 2.30 to see whether we had anyone who wished to make any representations. As I explained we, have people at 3.50 onwards who are planning to speak. I ought to ask the question of Mr Curtis who I see is sitting at the back. Do you wish to speak either now or later? You are under no obligation.

MR CURTIS: (Inaudible – speaking from the back of the room)

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I will leave you in peace to digest while you are there. I think we will adjourn now until 3.45 when I know we have three or four speakers coming at that stage. Thank you.

Later

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Good afternoon again. Mr Martlew is here who is proposing to speak and rather than wait an hour for the pleasure, I thought we could resume now. So if you are happy to speak, Mr Martlew, could you come and take the seat here which has the microphone. The format is pretty simple. Could you give your name and address? We are recording for the camera and for sound because it is part of the official consultation and therefore we will make sure everyone is recorded. The film will be released as part of giving all the information out later.

MR MARTLEW: Can you remind me of the format? Am I open for questions?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: It is a different type of format these days. It is not a debating format, it is a forum for giving information. After you have stated your name and address, if you would say what it is you wish to say and then I will check whether I have any points I would like to clarify or for you to expand upon and I will open it up to others for clarification. It is not a place for everyone to have a debate about what is going on or, indeed, for scoring political points, which I am sure you will not.

MR MARTLEW: No. I am sure nobody ever does.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: No, no-one ever does. In your own time, feel free.

MR MARTLEW: My name is Eric Martlew; I live at 3 Caldew Maltings, Caldewgate, although, because of the floods I am actually living in Penrith and the Border at the present time. My background is that I was elected to the city council in 1972. In various guises I represented part of the city for 38 years. From 1987 to 2010 I was a Member of Parliament until I retired. I think I have probably done every boundary inquiry since about 1974. I had a proper job at one time as well; I worked for Nestlé in the Dalston ward for 21 years so I know Dalston very well. I have given evidence on many occasions and some of that evidence has probably been pretty thin because, in reality, I am partisan, as are, I am sure, a lot of the people come here. I can remember in 2012 Rory Stewart making a very, very good case for Dalston to go into the new Solway and Penrith seat. I do not know whether John Stevenson has been here this week but I presume, if he was, he made a very good case for it to stay in Carlisle.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: He did.

MR MARTLEW: That was just guesswork, but I understand. I actually worked on the ward for 20 years and on balance I think we would prefer to be in a rural constituency than an urban one. That is my opinion.

I come to the point about numbers in the constituency. At this point I could rail against the injustice of what Parliament put through but it will not do me any good because you have to abide by what the rules say. I looked at – and you reminded me, Chair – that it was 2011 when we sat in this room and we looked again. At that time the proposal was to put Dalston into the rural seat and take it out of Carlisle. The reason was that there were – I am going to deal in old numbers, not for the last one – 79,000 electors in Carlisle without Dalston; with Dalston it made it 84,000 and therefore it was too big. Penrith and Solway with Dalston would have been 77,000; without it, it was 72,000. I looked from November 2015 and Dalston and Carlisle make 77,000; without Dalston it made 72,000. So Carlisle for some reason has lost 7000 electors since that time, even though the city has expanded. I looked at the Penrith and Solway ward and that did not appear to lose any at all in November. I know there was a cut-off at November. Since then the constituency that is being proposed for Carlisle now has 81,000 electors; which is of course above the 78,500, I think it is, that is being suggested. Those are the present day figures. I was talking to the electoral registration officer at the time. The issue is that you could put Dalston back into Penrith and Solway and it would still not go over the maximum. It is a decision for the government eventually but it is a decision for you to come forward with proposals and it is on a very knife-edge, except we all know, sitting round this table today, that the constituency of Carlisle has an electorate today of 81,000 electors, well above the figure that you are being asked to propose. I would ask that you take that into serious consideration.

The other issue, if this is too big a change – I do not think it is – and you want an alternative, then the alternative would be to take the Brough ward which, looking at the map, is called locally Brough-by-Sands. Its northern boundary is the Solway and its western boundary is part of the proposed Penrith and Solway constituency. It is the Solway and it does marry. That would have the effect today of probably taking 1700 electors out of the Carlisle constituency and putting them into the new Penrith and Solway.

So really I do not want to delay the committee too long but what I am saying is that we are sitting here today and we know that the Carlisle constituency now has regained many of those constituents who were magically lost on 1 November 2015. We also know that the Carlisle constituency will grow more because we have been hit by severe floods, a lot of people have not registered, there are people living outside the constituency – myself being a perfect example – so in fact it is going to go up further. I hope that you can take this into consideration. It would seem a nonsense to me to know that we were over the limit, to know that we come back for the next review, probably having to take Dalston out of the Carlisle constituency again. I do not think that is particularly a good idea, to keep moving from one to another. I represented the Dalston constituency from the 1997 election until 2010 when I retired. Before that it was in Penrith and the Border. If you are going to keep switching it backwards and forwards, I do not think it is a great problem but it is a problem. I do not think there is a problem with the fact that a constituency has more than one MP to represent it. The cosiness

about this – and this is worrying – is that it is all the city together and that seems to go against what is being said in the legislation in actual fact. If you have two MPs it is not a problem; there is not usually a conflict. The councillors quite like it because they play one off against the other.

That is my view, that Dalston would prefer to be in a rural constituency. The numbers are right to do it. If that is too much of a leap, then the 1700 electors from Brough could easily be put in the Solway constituency as it borders the Solway. I know you cannot do anything about it, but 1700 electors disappeared from the electoral roll; they did not disappear from Carlisle. Thank you very much.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Did you have an explanation for what happened to these 1700?

MR MARTLEW: Are we talking about the disappearance?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The change since the figures that the Boundary Commission have used from November/December and the figures that you are now saying.

MR MARTLEW: The figures you can get from the electoral roll. What happened was, it was an urban area. I have the figures of the ward I live in. November 2015 it was 3400. November this year it is 3900 and would have been more if it had not been for the floods. It was a quirk of the registration. The socio-economic issues with an urban area make it that more likely. We have a lot of flats in multiple occupation. It is not their priority to register. In fact, I was disappointed by the government from making it a criminal offence not to register to making it the equivalent of a parking fine. I think that says something else. I do not know whether you go round and talk to the electoral registration offices or what, but there is no doubt that those figures are correct.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Just so I understand because you probably know better than me----

MR MARTLEW: I probably know it so well that I do not explain it very well.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You went from November 2015 to November 2016 and here we are in October 2016.

MR MARTLEW: Sorry, October 2016.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Can I ask a slightly different question? I have noted on that point.

MR MARTLEW: Okay.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You talk about Brough and whether to move that into Penrith and Solway as an alternative.

MR MARTLEW: Yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: An alternative to if we do not want to move Dalston, then why not move someone else. Is that to bring down the numbers?

MR MARTLEW: To make it more even. What you cannot do is take Dalston and Brough because you would be over the 78,500. What you can do is one or the other. I would prefer Dalston because that was a case that was argued very strongly in 2012 by Rory Stewart. I think on the realistic figures that can be taken in. If that is not an option, if you think that takes it the wrong way too far, then the alternative would be to take in 1700 electorate from Carlisle into Penrith and Solway. I think Penrith and Solway is the smallest of the constituencies being proposed in Cumbria so it is easily able to take those numbers but Dalston or the other.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Help me again, if you may, and then I will open it to others. Is the city not beginning to expand out? I know you talk about Dalston being a rural ward, is that how you described it?

MR MARTLEW: All I said – and, as I say, I was quoting Rory Stewart – was that they would prefer to be in a rural constituency rather than an urban one. I represented them for 13 years; I worked there for 20 years. I know the ward very well. They look at themselves as a rural area. There is expansion and to some extent it is a suburb of Carlisle, I have to be honest. None of that can be said for Brough, of course, because basically it is an agricultural area.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: So slightly different arguments for both.

MR MARTLEW: Yes. Now I am not in Parliament I can perhaps be a little more straightforward than before.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: We have a lot of room for honest brokers in this room. Does anyone have any points of clarification?

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: Eric, it is good to see you again, albeit in a different environment. I have two quick questions for clarification. You are suggesting that the Boundary Commission figure of 76,825 is incorrect by a factor of about 4000 or 5000. Is that what you are saying?

MR MARTLEW: In reality, if you look back to the inquiry of 2012 and you look to the numbers we used then, and you look to the numbers that we are using now, there are

7000 fewer electors there than there were at that time. It is all to do with the cut-off date of 1 December 2015. By now, the numbers are going up greatly again partly because there was a rush for registration during the referendum. So the numbers have gone up and the numbers are there. I have checked today with the electoral registration officer who was outside the room before. The figures for the proposals that you are making at the moment are over 80,000; it is something like 80,500. So they have gone up. It was partly the unfortunate referendum that we had but people were desperate. These people have not disappeared because not only have areas like Dalston expanded, we are building houses all around the city. The urban areas are expanding as well. It was just the way it happened. I do not know whether it is your remit to ask the registration officer to come and talk to you. I am not saying anything that is not fact.

What is your second question?

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: Following on from that, if I may, it is a perfectly genuine situation but I am puzzled by is that if that has happened in Carlisle – and I accept what you are saying – presumably therefore it has happened in other parts of the county as well or other towns.

MR MARTLEW: If I were looking at it, I would imagine that it may have happened in Barrow but Carlisle is different. It did not happen in Penrith and the Solway because they are small towns, there are no students – we have a student population – and we have a lot of the old large terrace houses where there are houses in multiple occupation, flats. These are the people who did not register and will not register. What I am saying is what I believe are the facts and they can be clarified by independent sources.

SIR ROBERT ATKINS: My second question is, you take the view – and I agree with you – that Dalston is obviously a rural area. What makes Dalston, in your judgment, different to the other rural areas that surround Carlisle? Is there a particular point about Dalston that makes it different?

MR MARTLEW: Yes. For example, if you take Brampton then you do not have a constituency that does not cross other boundaries. The advantage of Dalston is that you would not have to cross anybody else's boundaries to get into Penrith and the Solway because it buttresses it on. The next ward, which will be Thursby, is actually in Penrith and Solway as it is being proposed. That is why you would go for Dalston. You wouldn't go for Brampton because it is way up the top and the areas that buttress further along do not have the numbers, to be honest.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: In practical terms, as you know, we are constrained by the rules of the exercise which say we are using 1 December 2015, so the argument is whether or not we need to allow headroom to avoid the table tennis game between reviews of any individual ward moving backwards and forwards.

MR MARTLEW: I think what I have proposed would not go above the 78,500 figure.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any other points anyone wishes to clarify? No. Thank you very much indeed.

MR MARTLEW: Thank you very much for letting me come; I look forward to reading the report.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Shall I suggest 3.45 as we were originally planning? Thank you.

Time Noted: 3.45 pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The position we have at the moment is that we have two booked speakers to come at 4 o'clock-ish and they are not here yet. Welcome to those who have joined us, Mr and Mrs Newrick. I think we met at the doorway; I opened the door for you, I recall, on the way down. I am sorry you have come a couple of times and we have not been sitting, but in a sense we would have only been sitting in an empty room waiting for people who may wish to speak and, of course, anybody who wishes to speak, can speak. It is the nature of the two days that we have spent more time waiting for people than listening over the two days. That is where we are now. I know Mr Curtis at some stage you may speak. Do you wish to speak, Mr Newrick?

MR NEWRICK: (Inaudible – speaking from back of room)

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You do not have to speak yet; you can wait or you can come and speak if you wish to now. We would look forward to it, if you wish to speak. If you do, would you mind coming up to here because we have a microphone here and it is easier for us to do so. I will invite you to come forward now. The position here is that it is not a debate really, it is an opportunity for me to listen to people giving me their views on the Boundary Commission's proposals. I am independent of the Boundary Commission for the purpose of this exercise and I am conducting a public hearing in order to gather information from whatever source it comes from, which may help me decide whether the proposals on the table are the right one or need revising. That is what we will do at the end of the oral hearings, which have another four days to go elsewhere, and there is opportunity for written representation still to come until 5 December. The position here is that I will ask you to speak in a moment. I will ask you to give your name and address. I know you have written it outside. We are filming these, but only because it is a matter of public record. If you could give your name and full address and say whatever it is you want to say, I may have things to clarify or ask you to elaborate on something and others may, but nobody will be here to challenge

you. You are entitled to say whatever you like. People do come hoping to have a nice debate but it is not that type of forum these days.

MR NEWRICK: The only thing I would like to say before we do anything like that is that it would have been beneficial, certainly for people like me, to have put in the local newspaper, in the *Cumberland News*, the format of what you were proposing to do here because I did not expect to come twice and discover that you were suspended. I take your point that there was no one here but as far as I am concerned I would have been happier to come earlier or if you had squashed it all into one day or had you been open all day, rather than coming twice. The gentleman outside very kindly said that he could email you and let you know if you wanted to come. I am going to speak broadly in support of what you have got on the table and I did not think it was worthwhile having me in the amphitheatre talking to myself with you in the background.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I think that is one of the difficulties. Had you been here five years ago – you may have been here five years ago – when there was a previous review then you may have had to join a queue to speak at that time because there was a different set of circumstances. Indeed, if you were in Manchester a week ago or in Liverpool at the end of this week then you probably would have had a full day's worth of opportunity to both hear the debate and join in. It just so happens, because of the nature of the proposals on the table for Cumbria, there are two things, one is that it has attracted a different level of discussion and argument this time. Secondly, it is quite difficult for the Boundary Commission to work out how best to communicate to everyone. They often rely on the local authority; you will see posters in the libraries and things like that. It is also difficult to run a live commentary, you know, "Are we sitting or are we not sitting?" unless we were doing it live on the radio somewhere. It may feel like we are doing it live on the radio, but in reality we are an intimate group of friends here.

MR NEWRICK: That is not a problem.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: So, please carry on.

MR NEWRICK: My name is David Newrick, Rays(?) House, Gilsland, Brampton, Cumbria. The house has been where it has been for 140 years but the Royal Mail keeps changing the postal code. Just so that everyone is aware, we are part of Carlisle City and even though the representation that we get from Carlisle City is not the greatest, it is not the worst. I am broadly in favour of the proposals that have been presented, moving, if you like, the districts back into Carlisle and moving away from Penrith and the Border. Having said that, Rory Stewart has been an excellent constituency MP and even though he is based in the Penrith area I have had a number of discussions with him. I have gone down there, he has come up here, so I have no complaints about how that has worked in the meantime. How we get on with John

Stevenson I do not know; that is something that we will have to engage and see but broadly speaking I am in favour of the proposals as they are put out.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much indeed. If I have got it right, you live right on the edge of region and the ward, as it happens.

MR NEWRICK: I do, yes. Our only previous effort with the Boundary Commission was about 1986, I think, when there was a discussion about moving Gilsland either entirely into Cumbria or entirely into Northumberland. We are on the Cumbria side and we wanted to stay on the Cumbria side because we felt that had made the local school very vulnerable to closure.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You are in the planned Carlisle constituency.

MR NEWRICK: Yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Where do you look to for your links? Would you link to Carlisle? Do you look into Carlisle from where you are up there?

MR NEWRICK: Yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Or do you look somewhere across the border maybe? I am not sure.

MR NEWRICK: It depends. At the moment Cumbria County Council does not support any bus services through the village. That was something that they decided to do a couple of years ago and withdraw all subsidies for local buses. So at the moment, because of ongoing squabbles, we have the AD122 which is the Hadrian's Wall bus terminates now in Northumberland because Northumberland are still paying the subsidy. After a lot of squeals, I believe we have three times a day in each direction the 185 that goes up to Birdoswald and then goes off into Haltwhistle. Birdoswald is about a mile from where we are in Gilvan Village, back into Cumbria, and five miles in the other direction to get a bus to Haltwhistle, to then pick up a bus that would go along the A69 and come into Carlisle.

Broadly speaking, I am on the parish council and when we have parish council meetings we usually have Lawrence Fisher, who is our county councillor and Syd Bowman, who is our city councillor. They usually come to our meetings. So yes, generally speaking, we look to Carlisle.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: So west, as it were, rather than south.

MR NEWRICK: Yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You were talking about Penrith and the like, which is where the old constituency ran.

MR NEWRICK: That is right. My wife does it more times than I do but it is about a 40 minutes' run from where we are to get down to Penrith. It is about half an hour to get into Carlisle. It depends on what roadworks or what is travelling around on the local roads.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Are there any points that anyone in the room wishes to mention? [No response] Thank you very much; I appreciate you joining in.

MR NEWRICK: Thank you.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Cllr Mallinson, do you feel ready to speak?

CLLR MALLINSON: Yes, I do.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you. I know you were here for a short while yesterday. The format is, if you give your name and address and then begin your presentation and at the end, as we just did a moment ago, we may or may not need or wish to seek any clarification from you.

CLLR MALLINSON: Good afternoon, my name is John Mallinson; my address is 2 Wordsworth Court, Carlisle, in the north of the city in the Belah ward, just on the fringe of the rural/urban area split. I am a member of Carlisle District Council, this council. I represent the Longtown and Rockcliffe ward which goes from the Solway Estuary, junction 44 of the M6, to the Scottish border. I am currently leader of the opposition on this council. I am also a member of Cumbria County Council for Stanwix and Irthington, which is a chunk in the central northern area of the City of Carlisle.

I want to talk quite a bit about Dalston later on, but I will just say that Longtown, which I represent the nucleus, the town of Longtown which I represent, is a small town to the north of Carlisle, not very far off the Scottish border. I wish to demonstrate that it is not dissimilar, although it is a bit larger, to Dalston in many, many ways. Just to give some context, I would say that Longtown has been part of Carlisle City Council for over 40 years, 1974 I think it was. In my view and I think the constituents in Longtown would agree, becoming part of Carlisle City Council has benefitted them greatly, the association. I also believe that the benefits of that association have been reciprocal and, indeed, administrations of whatever political persuasion have always been keen to be inclusive and support the rural as well as the urban area, by and large in equal measure. It is a homogenous area.

I believe that the Carlisle constituency proposals, as made by the Boundary Commission, are basically sound. Importantly – perhaps all importantly – they fall within the population parameters. Furthermore, I believe that whilst the local plan indicates significant house building within the district over the next number of years, interestingly the Office of National Statistics forecast very modest population growth over that coming period, I think, leading up to about 2030, only a couple of thousand, I believe. That is population, not electorate.

The only dissent to your proposals – I am coming back to Dalston really – that I am aware of is the assertion that Dalston should be excluded from the new constituency. I personally can see no logic for this. The current proposals mean that the parliamentary constituency and the district council's boundary would be coterminous. To remove Dalston from the constituency would follow no logic that I can see.

Over the last number of years development on the southern fringes of Carlisle have meant that parts of Dalston are now considered to be intricate parts of the urban area of Carlisle. If Dalston were to be excluded from the new Carlisle constituency then clearly Penrith and Solway – I think it is proposed to be called – and the Carlisle constituencies would be dissected through urban areas which would have no logic or understanding with the inhabitants of that area. This area is now so urban in nature that I believe actually a lot of people of that area who are in Dalston actually think they live in Harraby. It is so mixed, so connected. I think the people in that area from the Dalston portion enthusiastically use the superb new facilities at the new community campus in Harraby and in my view has basically intertwined their destiny for the foreseeable future.

About five years ago the CND (the Carlisle Northern Development route), better known to a lot of people as the Carlisle bypass, was opened and this goes from junction 44 in the north, wrapping round the north and west of the city almost as far as Dalston. Plans are now being developed for this road to continue around to junction 42, creating an area to the south of the city to enable development of both a commercial and residential nature which would much extend the urban creep and much of that would be into the Dalston ward. Dalston is very much considered a travel to work area for the city. There are many ties and connections with the city. Caldew cycle path is a means of easy access into the city for both pedestrians and cyclists alike from Dalston. One of my daughters, a resident of Dalston during the summer, has a very pleasant 15-minute cycle ride from her home in Dalston into her work in the heart of the city.

There are business links between Dalston and Carlisle. A large pharmacy chain, as well as many shops in Carlisle, has a small satellite branch in Dalston. If you travel between Carlisle and Dalston along the B5299 you will pass two of the largest employers in the area, Pirelli Tyres in Carlisle and Nestlé's milk processing plant in Dalston. Nestlé draws a portion of its workforce from Carlisle and Pirelli, in reverse, from Dalston. It is all part of the intrinsic connection between the two. In fact, possibly within some of our lifetimes, perhaps not in mine, although there are a few green fields

in between Carlisle and Dalston at the moment, I think it is possibly heading for them being built up.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I am sorry to interrupt you, but the Nestlé site and the Pirelli site, are they attached to the city, as it were, rather than further out?

CLLR MALLINSON: Pirelli is on the outskirts of Carlisle. Have you got the B5299 from Carlisle to Dalston?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Yes.

CLLR MALLINSON: Is the cemetery/crematorium on your map?

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Probably. I see a cross that looks like it could be.

CLLR MALLINSON: Pirelli is adjacent to that. The Nestlé factory is on the eastern outskirts of Dalston.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Of Dalston itself?

CLLR MALLINSON: Dalston itself, yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Dalston town?

CLLR MALLINSON: The hamlet/village/town, yes.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

CLLR MALLINSON: As I say, there is a big cross-flow between the two. When the Commission was last in town in 2011 the numbers game, which I accept has to be adhered to, seemed to make it impossible for Dalston to remain in the Carlisle constituency. Indeed, I remember Eric Martlew (MP for Carlisle up until 2010), like myself, in this chamber arguing strongly that Dalston remain in the Carlisle constituency. I think now that the numbers make that possible I would just see no rationale whatsoever for Dalston being excluded from Carlisle. It would just make no sense at all. I have not addressed the implications or indeed your proposals for other parts of the county, I think that is best left to others, however I would comment, as I understand from a superficial look at it, it would be hard to see how you would cope with the knock-on effect anyway. However, that is a matter for you to consider.

That is really all I wanted to say.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much indeed. I have a couple of questions, if I may, not least because I am running out of potential speakers and you are leader of opposition and therefore you might know a bit more than most on these things.

CLLR MALLINSON: One would hope so.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You were telling me that Longtown had been part of the city council since 1974.

CLLR MALLINSON: I think it is 1974. It is over 40 years anyway.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Do you happen to know how long Dalston has been part of it?

CLLR MALLINSON: I think about the same. I am not sure. I think about the same, yes. I was not a resident of Carlisle. I am a newcomer to Carlisle, less than 30 years.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: You may not know all the answers then.

CLLR MALLINSON: No. I am just a Johnny-come-lately!

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: The growth, the urban sprawl – that might be too grand a word for it – is that coming uniformly down or is it coming down through Carlton and that side, down the A6, towards junction 42?

CLLR MALLINSON: It would be predominantly to the west of the A6.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: So between the A6 and Dalston, coming in that direction.

CLLR MALLINSON: The proposal is that the southern development road or bypass or whatever you call it would join junction 42 to the present northern relief road and make a loop between junctions 42 and 44. The proposed development would be from the M6/A6 heading westwards, wrapping round within that development route and, I suppose, ultimately the other side of it.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Is this a proposed development which is aspirational rather than factual? Are there papers on the table at the council, for example?

CLLR MALLINSON: It would not so much involve this council other than its local plans and things like that. I would say that it is more than aspirational but not a done deal. As a member of Cumbria County Council I sit on what is called the Cumbria County

Council's Local Committee, which is basically the county councillors whose divisions fall within the Carlisle district – there are 18 of us – and we have discussed the matter from a highways perspective and considered preferred routes for the road and things like that. There are no signatures on contracts or anything like that but we will see some action within the next decade or less. The city council have come up with a very interesting proposal paper called "The Garden City" which will be subsumed, I believe ultimately when it goes through council, if agreement is achieved, within the local plan and that gives consideration to these proposals. As I say, it is not a done deal but personally I am confident that it will happen.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Those are the only points I had. Are there any other points that anyone in the room would like to clarify?

MR WILLIAMS: Richard Williams, 26 Curtis Road, Newcastle. You mentioned Dalston as being an area of significant urban growth and sprawl. Do you see it as having a much bigger population in the future?

CLLR MALLINSON: Not necessarily. I think we need to be clear about what we are talking about. There are what we would call the town or perhaps hamlet village of Dalston. I am talking about the ward in its entirety and that will be tacked on and extend the urban area to the south of Carlisle. If I have caused confusion, I am sorry. If that area does perhaps increase, the population of that specific area, the point that I was trying to make that the Office of National Statistics, who I am led to believe are reasonably accurate, do not perceive that there will be a big, or even a significant, increase in the population of Carlisle over the next decade and a half. They do not deny that there will be some modal shift within.

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much, Mr Mallinson; that has been very helpful. I wonder whether at this stage, Mr Curtis, you feel

MR CURTIS: (Inaudible – speaking from the back of the room)

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: I will just leave you to do your homework. Just to be clear, does that sound like you do not wish to speak at this particular hearing?

MR CURTIS: (Inaudible).

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you very much. We may be expecting another speaker; someone is planned to be here at four o'clock but was not feeling well yesterday and therefore cried off from yesterday and he is due to come today, a Mr Edwards. I am going to sit here and wait for a while in the hope that he may turn up. If there is no one else who wants to speak at the moment, I will go into a semi-adjudgment – call it a stupor – and I will just wait for a little while. Thank you.

After a short break

Time Noted: 4.25pm

THE LEAD ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER: Thank you all, gentlemen, who are remaining. It being 4.25 and there are no further planned speakers here in Carlisle and I am not anticipating a great deal of walk in from the street, and having consulted everyone, I have decided that it is sensible to close this hearing. Thank you very much for your attendance over the two days. For those of you who are there, I will see you in either Liverpool or Lancaster. Thank you very much and goodnight.

The hearing closed at 4.25pm

	A
SIR ROBERT ATKINS, 4, 9, 17, 18	
	B
MS BONDI, 3, 4, 5	
	C
MR CURTIS, 13, 26	
	D
MR DEVENISH, 11, 13	
	L
MR LISHMAN, 10	
	M
CLLR MALLINSON, 22, 24, 25, 26	
MR MARTLEW, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19	
	N
MR NEWRICK, 19, 20, 21, 22	
MS DELANEY, 5, 6	
	T
THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27	
	W
MR WHITESIDE, 7, 9, 10	
MR WILLIAMS, 26	