



Public consultation on certain
changes to Ordnance Survey
large-scale maps
(marginalia and physical
control information)

Summary of results and next steps

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1 Background

At Ordnance Survey we are changing the way we capture, manage and deliver our large-scale maps and other geographical information. This is primarily a response to changing user needs, but we are also taking the opportunity to introduce new technology that will enable us to provide a better service more efficiently. In effect we are moving towards a seamless map of Great Britain, allowing access to any geographical area of interest without the restrictions imposed by gridlines and standard map sizes. As a consequence of these wider changes, a limited number of specific changes to products and services are necessitated, in particular to our large scale mapping products. These planned changes remove some redundant and potentially out-of-date information.

2 Our proposals

We have undertaken public consultation on two specific proposals:

- To cease showing certain information in the margins of standard sheets generated from Ordnance Survey large-scale mapping data.
- To cease showing physical control information – bench marks and triangulation stations – in the OS MasterMap® Topography Layer.

3 The consultation process

Public consultation began on 7 February 2005 and ran until 3 May 2005. The process was designed to comply with the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation.

4 Outcome of the consultation

Sixteen responses were received.

4.1 Compliance with the Code of Practice

The process generally met the six criteria of the Code of Practice. One significant complaint was received from local government, where it seems that our decision to send the paper only to the Local Government Association meant that some local authorities learned of the consultation very close to the closing date. We intend that in future Ordnance Survey Liaison Officers (OSLOs) will be notified of consultations affecting local authorities. Many of those who received the printed consultation document requested an electronic copy, and methods of dissemination will be reviewed for future consultations.

4.2 Proposal: Changes to edge information (marginalia) from Ordnance Survey Land-Line® and Superplan® – standard sheet map versions only

Only two of the sixteen responses were critical of the proposal and both tempered this with an understanding of the reasons for change. There were no specific objections to removal of marginalia (Land-Line and Superplan), though the removal of any information from OS MasterMap Topography Layer was seen by two respondents as impacting historical research work in the future. Three local authority respondents perceived the changes as evidence of Ordnance Survey reducing the quantity and quality of geographical information in general.

From the findings of this exercise, further discussion with some of the respondents and previous customer consultation, we have identified no significant and specific negative customer impact of instigating the marginalia changes.

4.3 Proposal: Changes to access and presentation of Ordnance Survey control information: bench marks and triangulation points

The majority of respondents foresaw no negative impact of the changes proposed. However, five respondents identified specific negative impacts related to the accuracy and/or practicality of GPS surveys. Their feedback indicated that bench mark information may still be used to check GPS height measurements, and manual surveys are still carried out where satellite availability is a problem (under tree cover or below cliffs, for example).

It would appear that there still exists a genuine need to continue to provide the benchmark and triangulation symbols in Land-Line, Superplan and OS MasterMap Topography Layer.

The other strand of negative comment on the removal of vertical control information appeared to be linked either to lack of current information on the use of GPS technology or lack of information from Ordnance Survey on the current and future status of freely available vertical control information and the declining quality of the currently available data.

5 Next steps

5.1 Changes to edge information (marginalia) from Ordnance Survey Land Line and Superplan – standard sheet map versions only.

As envisaged prior to the consultation, we propose to remove administrative and electoral boundary information, and distinctive and descriptive names from the edge information on Ordnance Survey Land-Line and Superplan. An implementation plan for removal will be prepared and customers will be informed of these proposed changes.

5.2 Changes to access and presentation of Ordnance Survey control information: bench marks and triangulation points.

In the light of the information gleaned from this consultation, we plan to implement a modified version of our original proposal:

Land-Line and Superplan – bench mark symbols and values, and triangulation point symbols will be retained as features.

OS MasterMap – bench mark and triangulation point symbols will be retained. Bench mark height data will be withdrawn and provided, together with supporting information, free of charge on the Ordnance Survey website.

A programme of change to the above mapping products will be announced to customers in due course. Information will also be provided on the product pages of the Ordnance Survey website.

6 Contact

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