

Malvern Hills District Council

Personal Details:

Name:

E-mail:

Postcode:

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I wish to object to the proposed Ward boundary changes to the Longdon Ward, specifically the proposal to move Holdfast and Queenhill to Ripple ward. My objections are threefold • Physical separation • Functional separation • Community Identity In preparing this statement, I have had regard to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (the 2009 Act) and the Electoral Reviews Technical Guidance (April 2014) Paragraphs 3.5 and 3.6 of the Technical Guidance state; "In broad terms, in making recommendations, we are required to have regard to: • the need to secure equality of representation; • the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities; and • the need to secure effective and convenient local government. Included in the community identities and interests criterion is the desirability of fixing boundaries which are and will remain easily identifiable, and which will not break local ties. Our aim is to identify clear and long-lasting boundaries for ward/division. We also take into account factors such as the location and boundaries of parishes and the physical features of the local area when drawing boundaries."

Physical separation Holdfast and Queenhill are separated from Ripple Ward by the River Severn and to travel to Ripple involves a 12-mile round trip by road through Upton-Upon-Severn. This appears to be against Schedule 2 of the 2009 Act and paragraph 3.9 of the Guidance that the Commission should "take into account factors such as the location and boundaries of parishes and physical features of the local area when drawing boundaries" It seems that in suggesting that Holdfast and Queenhill should sit with Ripple ward, the Commission has failed to follow the provisions of the Act or the Guidance. Further, in my opinion, this proposal runs the risk of disenfranchising the residents of Holdfast and Queenhill, who may find it difficult to attend a Polling Station in Ripple.

Functional Separation The advice outlines that the Commission has limited powers in relation to parish councils and can neither create nor abolish a parish council. Nor can it change the boundary of an existing parish. That said, as I understand the proposed changes, this would result in our District Councillor representing Ripple and our Parish Council being Longdon PC. In rural areas like our, the two functions are very much inter-linked with the Ward Member using their budget to contribute toward Parish Council investments such as speed signage, the lengthsman scheme and contributions towards the village hall and playing fields (both in Longdon). I believe that the proposed arrangement could put these much-needed services at risk. As there is no municipal cemetery nearby, Longdon PC pays a contribution to St Nicholas Queenhill with Holdfast to act as the burial ground. Would that continue under the new arrangement, or would we have to be buried at Ripple Church? Again, the Commission should heed its own guidance. Para 3.18 says; "A misalignment of electoral boundaries for county, district and parish elections is both confusing for electors and an impediment to effective and convenient local government."

Community identity Holdfast and Queenhill identify with Longdon as part of the same community. Longdon Memorial Hall (the rebuilding of which was paid for by public subscription) and the playing field opposite, are our community facilities where the Play Group, Brownies, Women's Fellowship, exercise classes and other community events occur. Our vicar is the Longdon vicar and we share community and church events with Longdon PCC. We have no community involvement with Ripple and are unlikely to wish to travel so far to use the village hall, etc.

Alternative suggestions In order to create the correct sizes, I believe there are better solutions, Ideally, I believe the existing Longdon Ward should be left as it is. Or if necessary, make the M50 the physical ward boundary and put Bushley with Ripple Another option could be to separate Upper Welland and putting with Malvern Wells as there is more synergy between the two. Castlemorton could then go with the balance of Welland.

Uploaded Documents:

[Download \(https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1647885318_Objection+to+Boundary+Commission.docx\)](https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1647885318_Objection+to+Boundary+Commission.docx)

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- Functional separation
- Community Identity

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“In broad terms, in making recommendations, we are required to have regard to:

- the need to secure equality of representation;*
- the need to reflect the identities and interests of local communities;*

and

- the need to secure effective and convenient local government.*

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