

Objection to the Proposed Merger of Ercall Magna Parish Council with Waters Upton Parish Council

Dear [REDACTED] and the Community Governance Review Committee,

As a resident of Ercall Magna Parish, I am writing to formally object to the proposal to merge Ercall Magna Parish Council with Waters Upton Parish Council. This proposal does not reflect the views of our community and offers no meaningful benefit. The reasons for my objection are outlined below:

1. Strength and Stability

Ercall Magna Parish Council represents more than 1,400 electors—approximately 1% of the borough's population—and spans the largest geographic area of any parish council in Telford & Wrekin. It is a capable, independently functioning body with a strong governance record. Supported by an experienced Clerk and 13 elected councillors—many of whom are long-standing residents—it operates with transparency, local knowledge, and proven responsiveness to community needs. There is no demonstrable reason to restructure a system that already works effectively.

2. Distinct Identity and Local Priorities

Ercall Magna and Waters Upton are separate communities with differing demographics, geographic features, and priorities. A merger would erode their unique identities and compromise the ability to address local concerns. Combining budgets and administrative structures could lead to misaligned funding and reduced responsiveness.

3. Weakened Democratic Representation

Reducing the number of councillors from 13 to just 7 across a larger area threatens both democratic engagement and the effectiveness of local representation. Residents may be discouraged from standing for election or engaging with the council, especially as remaining councillors would carry heavier workloads. Ercall Magna parish councillors are unpaid volunteers who give their time freely. How could reducing their number possibly improve effectiveness? This proposal risks overburdening them and deterring future participation—weakening a system that is already fair and inclusive.

4. Impact on Access and Service

Many residents and councillors currently attend meetings and events on foot. Expanding the council's geographic area would increase reliance on transport and introduce barriers for those without access—particularly older residents and individuals with limited mobility. This change risks excluding not only active members of the community but also those who might otherwise consider standing for election. Additionally, Ercall Magna Parish Council delivers responsive, locally informed support that may not be replicable within a larger, merged authority. The proposed expansion threatens the quality, inclusivity, and immediacy of service delivery.

5. Unnecessary Financial Burdens

A merger would generate new costs: replacing signage, transferring assets, updating legal documents, and adapting administrative systems. These expenses are unjustified, particularly given that Ercall Magna already functions efficiently and independently.

6. Incomplete Consultation and Oversight

Phase one of this consultation received only seven comments about Ercall Magna Parish Council—none advocating this merger. Waters Upton residents likewise submitted no such proposal. The consultation failed to offer a “retain current structure” option, limiting the public's ability to express

support for the status quo. Additionally, the published documentation contains multiple grammatical, spelling, and numerical inaccuracies, for example, a miscalculation of councillor ratios in High Ercall Ward: 1,225 electors divided by six seats equates to 204 electors per councillor, not 211 as stated. These oversights suggest the process lacks both precision and meaningful public engagement.

7. Flawed Rationale and Priorities

Telford & Wrekin Council claims the merger “would allow for the Parish Council to remain a viable council capable of providing services to its residents whilst maintaining community identity.” Yet reducing councillor numbers and expanding geographic coverage directly undermines these objectives. In reality, the proposal seems designed to streamline borough-level administration rather than strengthen local representation. Residents should not be expected to trade democratic engagement and community responsiveness for bureaucratic convenience.

Conclusion

Ercall Magna Parish Council is effective, inclusive, and respected. The proposed merger lacks public support and risks undermining representation, accessibility, and service standards. I strongly urge Telford & Wrekin Council to reconsider and withdraw this proposal and maintain the independence of Ercall Magna Parish Council.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the author.