



# Comment on suggestion 29

Asian Business Association of Whitehorse

3 pages

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The Asian Business Association of Whitehorse (ABAW) is grateful for the opportunity to provide our comments on Suggestions regarding the proposed redistribution of federal electorate boundaries in Victoria.

### **About the Asian Business Association of Whitehorse**

The ABAW is a not-for-profit organisation with a mission to enhance the quality of commercial activities in the City of Whitehorse through the organisation of various events involving the general public.

The ABAW works closely with Whitehorse City Council each year to organise the Box Hill Chinese New Year Festival, which is one of the largest local community events.

Our members predominantly include businesses and traders from the Box Hill area, and we pride ourselves on the close collaboration and connections we have with residents and community organisations throughout our area. For example, we recently partnered with ABAW members and local businesses to donate \$40,000 to the Eastern Health Agility Response Fund for coronavirus equipment at Box Hill Hospital.

### **Box Hill and Blackburn's strong orientation towards Doncaster and Doncaster East**

While the ABAW is a predominantly business focussed organisation, we have a great interest in the health and wellbeing of our community. We have close connections with a myriad of community organisations (often through sponsorships from our members), and our members are in most cases local residents themselves. We also work closely with local, state and federal government representatives to further the commercial and community-based objectives of our members.

We are therefore invested in the cohesiveness of our community, including those that relate to the electoral boundaries as they pertain to our area.

In this respect the ABAW notes that among the Suggestions to the Redistribution Committee there is a (nearly) universal view that the Box Hill and Blackburn areas may need to move from the Chisolm electorate. We understand the numerical requirement of the redistribution which lead to these suggestions.

In our strong view, the areas of Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North orient most strongly toward Doncaster and Doncaster East, in the Menzies electorate. And for that reason, we believe Suggestions S13, S43, S85, S90 and S97 offer the only sensible and potentially enduring realignment of our electoral boundaries.

The fact that Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North orient most strongly towards Doncaster and Doncaster East may be summarised as follows:

- With five major road connections across the Eastern Freeway in very close proximity, being Elgar Rd, Station St, Middleborough Rd, Surrey Rd/Blackburn Rd and Springvale Rd, there is excellent connectivity between Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North in the Chisolm electorate and Doncaster/Doncaster East in the Menzies electorate. This allows for the easy flow of residents both ways, meaning that the Eastern Freeway does not act as a 'barrier' between these areas;



- Box Hill Central Shopping Centre (from which many ABAW members trade) draws a significant volume of our customer base from Doncaster, Doncaster East, Templestowe and Lower Templestowe which are all directly connected to Box Hill via the convenient road connections of Elgar Rd, Station St and Middleborough Rd;
- Outside of central Box Hill, the closest major shopping centre utilised by residents of Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North is Westfield Doncaster, which is conveniently linked via Elgar Rd, Station St/Tram Rd and Middleborough Rd. North Blackburn Shopping Centre which is located between Middleborough Rd and Surrey Rd/Blackburn Rd draws significant volumes of its customers from Doncaster and Doncaster East. And finally, other retail trade areas in Doncaster East also draw a significant volume of their customers from Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North; being Jackson Court Shopping Centre via Middleborough Rd and Tunstall Square via Surrey Rd/Blackburn Rd and Springvale Rd;
- The Secondary School zones for Doncaster Secondary College, Blackburn High School and Koonung Secondary College each straddle the Eastern Freeway. Each of these school zones simultaneously cover areas from the Doncaster and Doncaster East areas of Menzies and the Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North areas of Chisolm, highlighting the close community connections between these areas;
- Box Hill Hospital and the health services based in this immediate health precinct within the existing Chisolm electorate service residents in Bulleen, Doncaster, Doncaster East, Templestowe and Lower Templestowe;
- As an example of the close community group connections between Doncaster/Doncaster East and the Blackburn/Blackburn North area, we can refer to the largest sporting association in the area, the Blackburn Vikings Basketball Club. The Vikings have more than 100 teams and over 800 registered players and are based at Slater Reserve, Blackburn North. Importantly, these 800 registered players and their families are drawn predominantly from Blackburn, Blackburn North, Doncaster East, Doncaster, Box Hill and Box Hill North. And while the Vikings home courts are at Slater Reserve their secondary stadium is located at East Doncaster Secondary College. Which again explains the high levels of community connections between these areas;
- Large faith communities based on the existing Menzies and Chisolm electoral boundary (of which some ABAW members are part) draw significant numbers of congregants from both sides of this boundary, including the Chinese Methodist Church of Box Hill (Box Hill North), NewHope Baptist Church (Blackburn North), St Alfred's Anglican Church (Blackburn North), Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Doncaster), Donvale Presbyterian Church (Donvale) and One Community Church (Blackburn), again highlighting the close community connections between these areas; and

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- With excellent walking and cycling tracks, residents of Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North heavily utilise the Koonung Creek Linear Reserve which is a shared recreational link a with residents of Doncaster and Doncaster East in the Menzies electorate.

Accordingly, we reiterate our support for Suggestions S13, S43, S85, S90 and S97 which all recognise the close community links, and strong orientation of Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North towards Doncaster and Doncaster East in the Menzies electorate. We believe these Suggestions offer the best understanding of our community.

In this respect, we strongly oppose Suggestions S24, S28, S31, S34, S70, S99, S100 and S101 which completely ignore these community links and seek to include Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North in an electorate that, in our view, would have very little community coherence.

Including Box Hill, Box Hill North, Blackburn and Blackburn North in an electorate that stretches all the way to Kilsyth seems to have very little (if any) community connection from our perspective, so we strongly oppose Suggestions S24, S28, S31, S34, S70, S99, S100 and S101.

We thank you for considering our comments.

Your sincerely,

  
Tom Zheng  
President

27 OCT 2020