



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Comment on Objections 130

Duncan S

2 pages

Submission Against Redistribution of Mackellar Electorate Boundaries

To the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC):

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed redistribution of the Mackellar electorate boundaries, including St Ives and St Ives Chase from the Upper North Shore. While I acknowledge the importance of fair representation and the need for periodic adjustments to electoral boundaries, I firmly believe that the suggested inclusion of these areas into Mackellar does not meet the criteria set forth by the AEC.

Communities of Interest

The Northern Beaches and the Upper North Shore are distinct and separate communities with different councils, sporting competitions, school catchments, shopping and business precincts, and social dynamics. The Northern Beaches, represented by Mackellar, has a unique coastal and forest lifestyle fostering a strong community among its residents. This is evident in the active participation in surf clubs, schools, community groups, and local sporting competitions.

In contrast, St Ives and St Ives Chase, part of the Upper North Shore, belong to a different social and economic sphere. These areas are more aligned with the Ku-ring-gai Council and share closer ties with other North Shore suburbs in terms of schooling, shopping, and business interactions. Incorporating St Ives into Mackellar would disrupt the existing cohesion of both communities, isolating St Ives residents from their natural community of interest.

Transport Links and Communication

The public transport links between St Ives and the rest of Mackellar must be improved. There are no direct public transport connections between St Ives and key areas within Mackellar, such as Frenchs Forest or the southern parts of the electorate. This lack of connectivity would hinder effective representation and community integration, making it difficult for residents to engage with their elected representatives and participate in community activities.

Physical Features

The geographical separation between the Northern Beaches and the Upper North Shore is significant. The Garigal and Ku-ring-gai National Parks, along with Cowan and Middle Creeks, form natural barriers that have historically delineated these regions. The AEC has long recognised these physical features as defining boundaries, and there is no compelling reason to alter this longstanding delineation.

State Electorate Divisions

While state electorate divisions are a subordinate consideration, it is worth noting that the Redistribution Committee's decision to keep Mackellar wholly within the Northern Beaches

Council area is logical and beneficial. Aligning federal and state boundaries where possible enhances administrative efficiency and community representation.

References to Objections

In support of my opposition, I reference Objection 671 and Objection 686. Both objections highlight the importance of maintaining the distinct identities and cohesive communities of the Northern Beaches and the Upper North Shore. Objection 671 underscores the differences in communities of interest, while Objection 686 emphasizes the geographical and transport challenges that would arise from incorporating St Ives into Mackellar.

Including St Ives and St Ives Chase into Mackellar would be an illogical decision that undermines the social and economic cohesion of both the Northern Beaches and the Upper North Shore. It would create an electorate divided by geography, weak transport links, and disparate communities of interest. The current proposal to strengthen Mackellar by incorporating Dee Why, Forestville, Frenchs Forest, Killarney Heights, and North Curl Curl is a far more sensible approach that respects the unique identity and cohesion of the Northern Beaches community.

I urge the AEC to reject the proposed inclusion of St Ives and St Ives Chase into Mackellar and to maintain the integrity of the Northern Beaches by keeping its representation unified and strong.

Sincerely,

Duncan S
Narrabeen