



Objection 157

Dot Haynes OAM

11 pages

21 June 2024

Redistribution Committee
Locked Bag 4007
CANBERRA ACT 2601

RE: VICTORIAN DRAFT REDISTRIBUTION

Dear committee,

I welcome the opportunity to comment on the draft boundaries proposed by the AEC.

The AEC’s current proposal completely alters the seat makeup of eastern Melbourne, which is disproportionately impacted by the redistribution proposal. The traditional East-West orientation of Deakin and Menzies has been upended, causing massive disruptions to communities of interest, urban geography, and lines of transport.

In this submission I will outline an alternative proposal, which ensures all seats remain within quota, but minimises disruption to communities of interest.

My background:

I have been a resident of Menzies, Manningham, and the Doncaster area for 30 years. I am a former Manningham Councillor, Deputy Mayor, and current secretary of the Doncaster RSL.

A] My proposal:

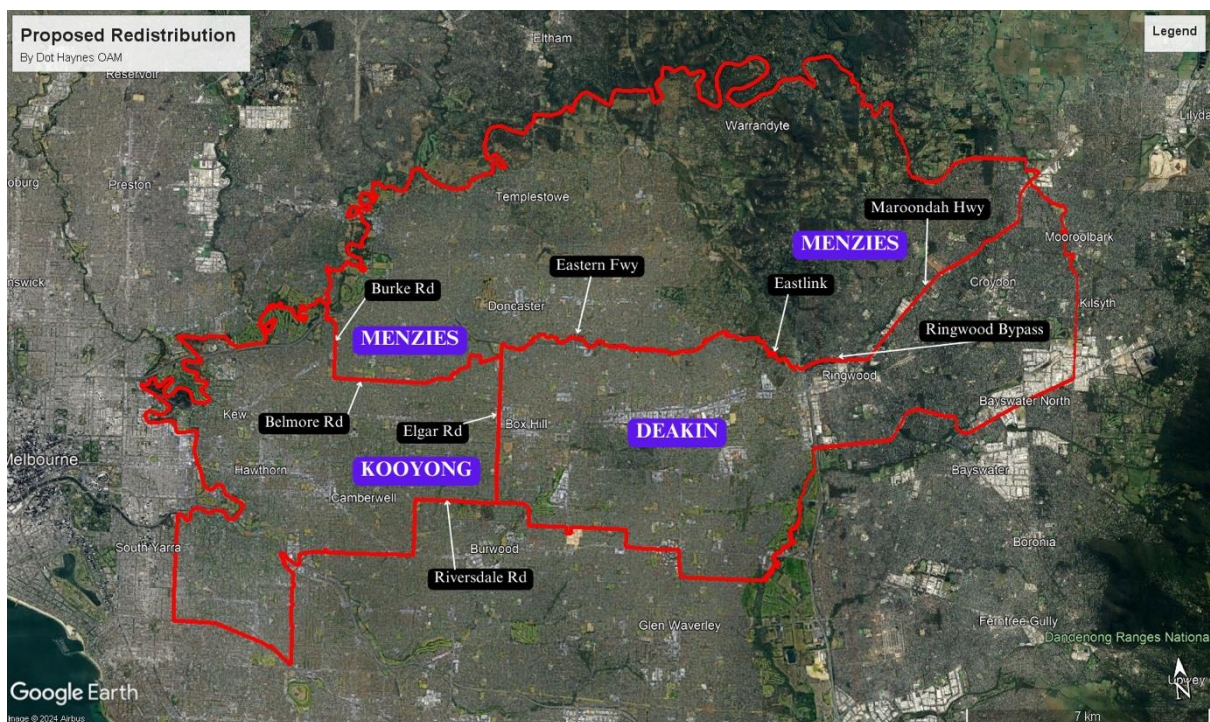


Fig 1: Map of my proposal, all boundary changes marked.

My proposal involves changes to Kooyong, Menzies, and Deakin. It disrupts no other seats, and all three seats remain in quota according to SA1 data provided by the AEC.

| Seat | 2023 electors – My proposal | 2028 electors - My proposal |
|-------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Kooyong | 121,305 | 129,567 |
| Menzies | 124,129 | 130,265 |
| Deakin | 122,717 | 130,409 |

It makes three main changes to the map.

- Balwyn North is added to Menzies, Mont Albert and Surrey Hills return to Kooyong.
- All the part of Whitehorse City Council allocated to Menzies is allocated to Deakin.
- Donvale and Park Orchards are returned to Menzies, Croydon Hills and Ringwood North are returned to Menzies as per pre-2016.

1.1 Issues with the current proposal – *History*:

The fundamental issue with the current proposal is that it disrupts the East-West orientation of Deakin and Menzies. This goes against the historical precedent of all past Victorian Redistributions. For example, historically Blackburn North, Blackburn, and Blackburn South were all contained within the division of Deakin, while Park Orchards, Donvale, Warranwood, Croydon Hills, and Croydon North were in Menzies. This history was aligned with local councils, key arterials, the Yarra River, transport, and shopping. See below maps for illustration.

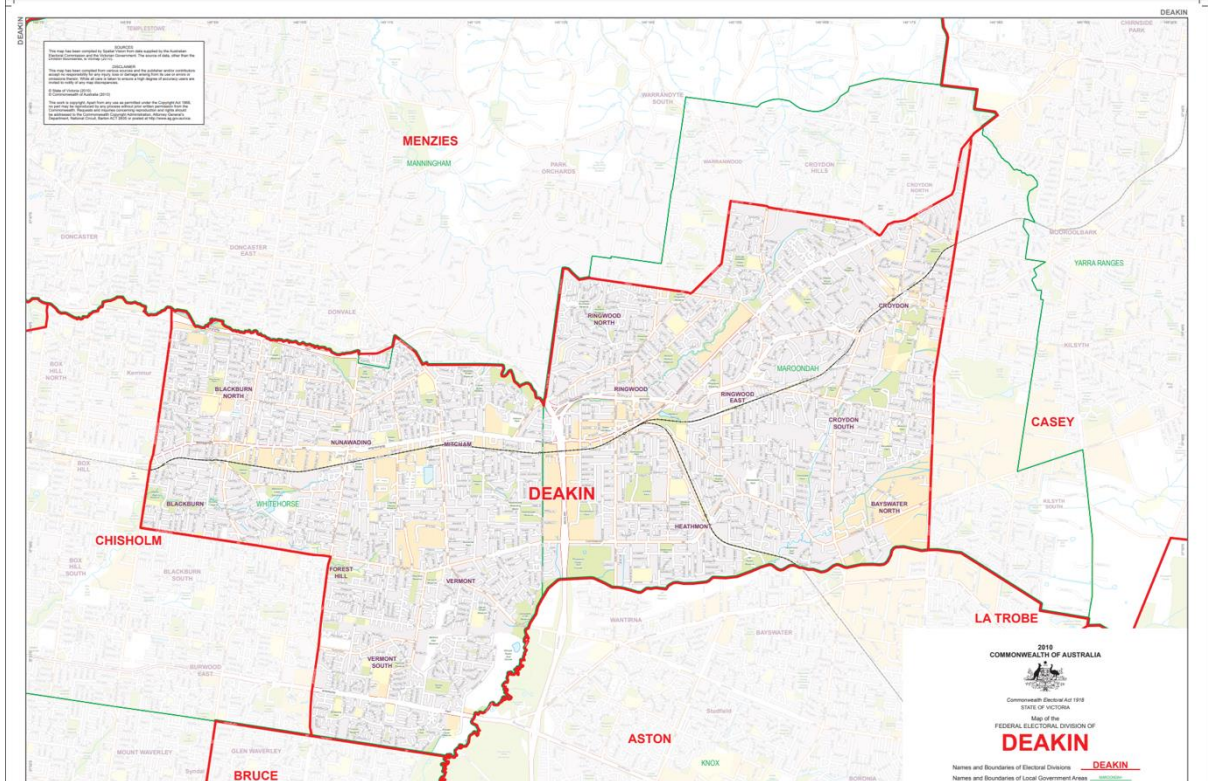
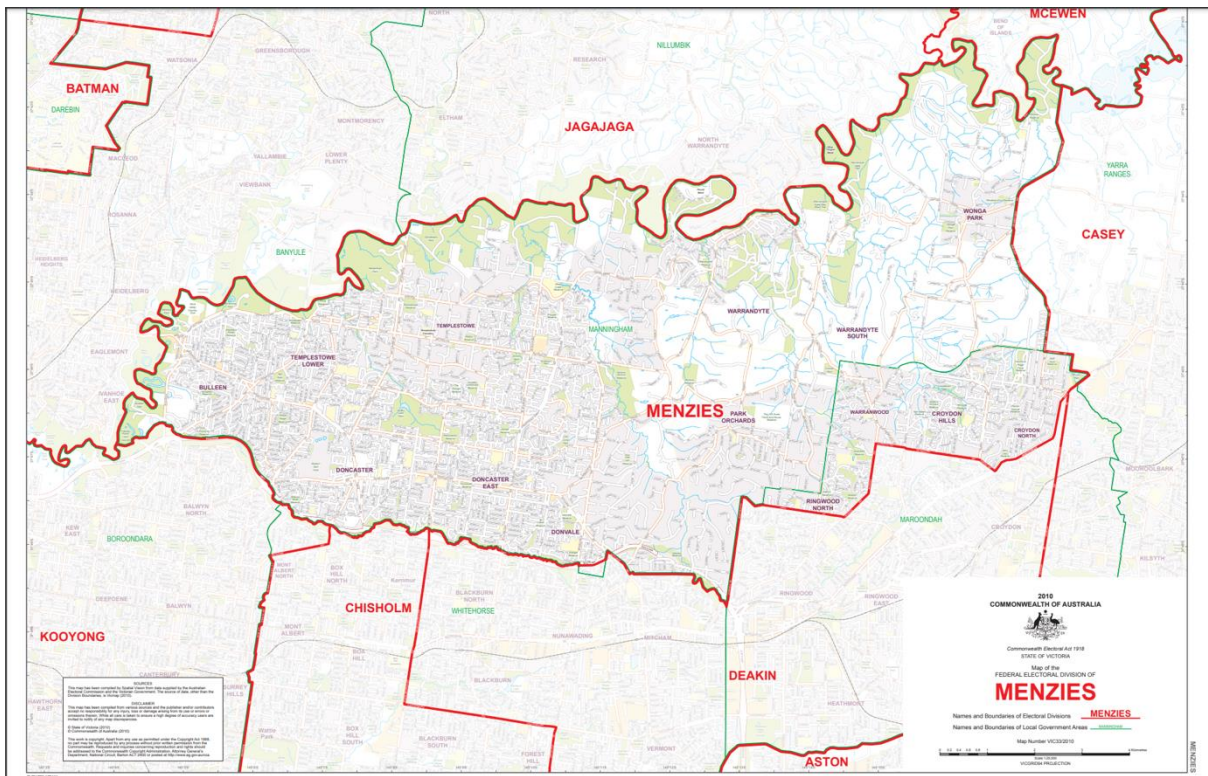


Fig 2: 2010 division maps of Menzies and Deakin

This redistribution proposal reverses this status quo, causing large amounts of disruption, far more disruption than is required to balance elector numbers. The current draft is particularly confusing for the seat of Menzies, where Box Hill South is being aligned with Warrandyte. There is simply no justifiable connection for a seat to be in that shape.

1.2 Issues with the current proposal – Council Boundaries:

There are several communities of interest that are severely affected by the current proposal. The first is Manningham City Council. Under every single previous iteration of Menzies, all of Manningham City Council was located within the boundaries of the division.

Dividing Manningham between multiple electorates will complicate advocacy for both council and residents. It will also weaken the strong sense of community that Manningham is so well known for. This was made clear by Manningham City Council themselves in Suggestion 59.

1.3 Issues with the current proposal – Park Orchards/Donvale:

The way in which Manningham City Council has been divided brings significant problems of its own. Donvale and Park Orchards are tied to Templestowe and Warrandyte, and have now been lumped into Deakin, where they have little in common with the other suburbs making up the electorate. Several points illustrate this.

- As this table sets out, the population density of Park Orchards and Donvale matches surrounding suburbs in Menzies, but none of the surrounding suburbs in Deakin.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Suburb | Croydon North | Donvale | Park Orchards | Warrandyte | Warrandyte South | Templestowe |
| Density | 2020/km ² | 996/km ² | 403.7/km ² | 314.8/km ² | 281.1/km ² | 1,154/km ² |
| Suburb | Ringwood North | Ringwood | Croydon Hills | Croydon | | |
| Density | 1,916/km ² | 1,877/km ² | 2,029/km ² | 2100/km ² | | |

- Donvale and Park Orchards are both zoned as low density residential. Menzies has low density residential zoning in Templestowe and Warrandyte, as well as very similar rural conservation zone around Warrandyte and Warrandyte South. Deakin has no low density residential or rural conservation zone in the entire proposed electorate.
- Low density residential zone and rural conservation zones are areas which combine a distinct mixture of rural and suburban life, restricting allowed amenities and services but allowing large amounts of green space and agricultural activities. They therefore have different issues which require unique representation.
- Donvale and Park Orchards share these issues and the need for representation with Templestowe, Warrandyte, and Warrandyte South, they should not be isolated from them.
- An example of these representational issues can be found in emergency services. Park Orchards, Donvale, Templestowe, and Warrandyte are all part of a CFA district and Bushfire risk area, whereas only Warranwood is in Deakin. This helps form the argument that Warranwood should be a part of Menzies, as will be laid out later in this document. Under the AEC proposal the CFA, council, and emergency services will now have double the number of federal stakeholders in the event emergency management is required. This not just inefficient, but potentially dangerous.
- Deakin is a mixed-use suburban seat with large industrial areas, it is not sound to include the semi-rural green wedge suburbs of Park Orchards and Donvale in Deakin.

2.1: Benefits of my proposal – *Uniting the Balwyn North/Doncaster community of interest:*

There is a clear Balwyn North-Doncaster community of interest. My proposal unities these two communities. Balwyn North is highly sensitive to decisions made about Doncaster, so it should be represented by the same federal member as Doncaster. Several points illustrate these links.

- Balwyn North is 32% Chinese, Doncaster is 36.8% Chinese, and Doncaster East is 38%. Kooyong has no suburbs with high Chinese populations outside of Balwyn.
- Chinese Australians in Balwyn North utilise multicultural services in Manningham, including seniors' services, and other Chinese community groups.
- Balwyn North relies on Westfield Doncaster and surrounds in Menzies for basic services including shopping, it is by far the closest activity centre to Balwyn North.
- Balwyn North relies on Doncaster Park and Ride for public transportation, every single bus line in the suburb orients towards this hub or elsewhere in Menzies (284, 207, 285, 200, 302, 304).
- Road transport in Balwyn North also orients towards Menzies, including Doncaster Rd, Belmore Rd, Bulleen Rd, and Greythorn Rd. In addition, most residents of Balwyn North use the Eastern Freeway, placing them in a common community of interest with Doncaster and Bulleen in regard to the construction and maintenance of the North-East link project.
- Balwyn North also shares the school zones of Belle Vue Primary School and Boroondara Park Primary School with Menzies. Given 57.3% of Balwyn North households are families with Children, this is particularly important.
- Balwyn North is part of the same Fire Rescue Victoria district as Bulleen, Doncaster, but in a different district than Kew, Hawthorn, and most of the rest of Kooyong.
- Balwyn North is part of the Eastern Football Netball League, this league is primarily made of clubs in Menzies and Chisholm, Balwyn North is the only suburb in Kooyong that participates in this league.

2.2 Benefits of my proposal – *Uniting Manningham within Menzies:*

As explained above, including Park Orchards and Donvale in Deakin creates numerous problems, given these two suburbs have little in common with the rest of Deakin. My proposal negates all these issues by continuing to include them within the division of Menzies.

2.3 Benefits of my proposal - *Strong and Historical East-West boundaries:*

As discussed in the problems section, both Menzies and Deakin have historically been East-West seats. This is for good reason, both seats developed on an East-West basis, and their urban structure and transport links reflect this. This is the case not just for Menzies and Deakin, but all outer suburban Eastern seats. The only exceptions are Goldstein (limited by geography) and Aston (to adhere to Knox council). Menzies and Deakin have no good reason not to be East-West.

My proposal gives both Menzies and Deakin strong natural boundaries. Menzies is bordered by Burke Rd, Belmore Rd, the Eastern Freeway, Eastlink, the Yarra River, and the Maroondah HWY. This is far better than the current situation, where boundaries in the south of Menzies include Greythorn Rd, Union Rd, Warrigal Rd, Riversdale Rd, and Eley Rd.

Many of these roads are normal suburban streets, with a single lane, roundabouts, and on street parking. These are not strong borders that divide communities. My proposed boundaries are also historic. Until 2019, the Eastern Freeway and Eastlink had always been the southern borders of Menzies.

Deakin also becomes defined by the strong borders of the Maroondah HWY, Eastlink, Eastern Freeway, and Elgar Rd.

Maroondah Highway especially is a very strong natural boundary. There are no roads that cross over Maroondah Highway, which has led Ringwood North, Warranwood and Croydon Hills to develop as a separate community to Croydon and Ringwood, despite the names. This means that it is sensible to split them into two electorates, with the strong barrier of the highway.

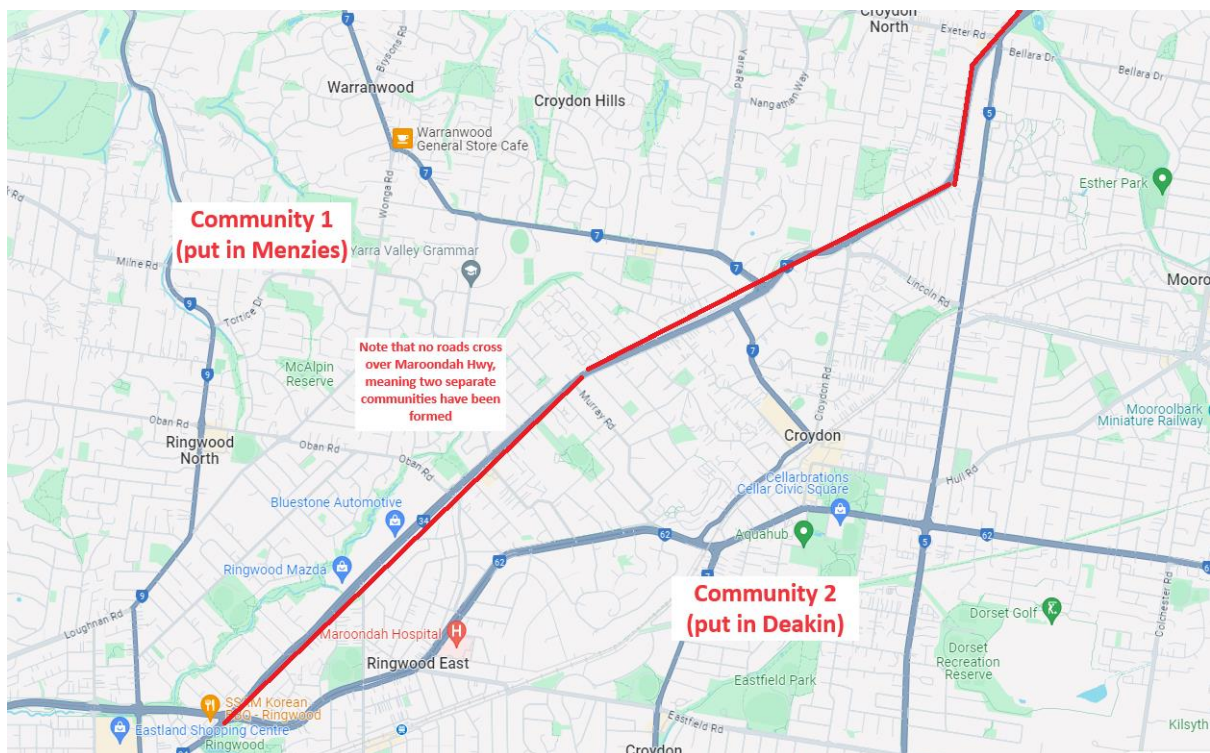


Fig 3: How the Maroondah Hwy divides Deakin

Croydon North has its own Coles, distinct from Croydon Coles, as an example of how the strong natural boundary of Maroondah Hwy has led to the development of two different communities.

The below aerial photography from 1945 (Fig 5) and 1981 (Fig 6) further demonstrates this point. The bottom left of the image, Croydon and Ringwood, was already highly urbanised by the 1980s, and looks similar to today. Contrasted to that, Croydon Hills, Warranwood, and Ringwood North are much less urbanised. They have developed into low-density suburbia over the last 43 years, while Ringwood and Croydon have further urbanised, mirrored by zoning. In fact, Warranwood was barely a suburb 40 years ago, and so to look at it as a homogenous suburb with the long-standing Ringwood is a mistake.

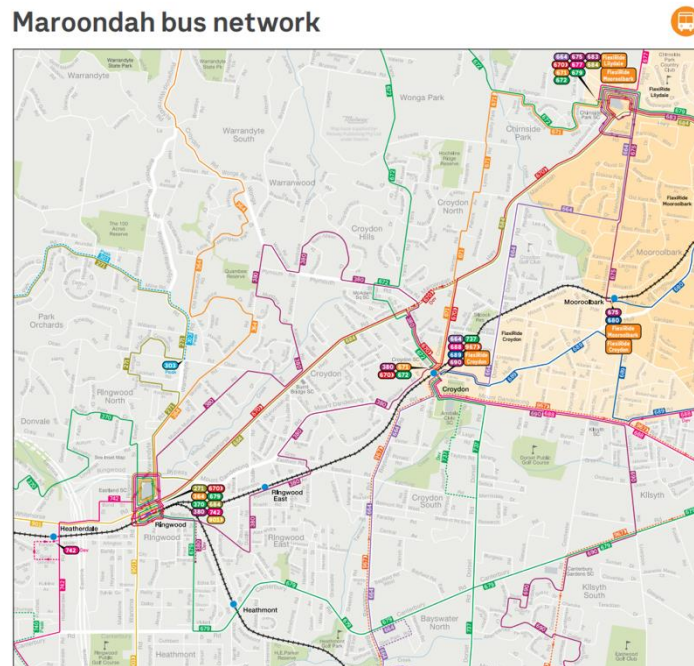
2.4 Benefits of my proposal – *Simplifying council representation:*

Respecting the East-West orientation improves council representation. Manningham becomes largely represented by one electorate, Maroondah by two, and Whitehorse by two. As was explained in suggestion 59, this improves representation, and strengthens communities.

2.5 Benefits of my proposal – *Respecting East-West transport links:*

The East-West orientation proposed also respects transport links in the area, an outline of these links is given here.

- Under my proposal, Menzies is oriented around the clear East-West lines of transport that are: Doncaster Rd, the Eastern Freeway, Eastlink, the Maroondah HWY, and Heidelberg Warrandyte Rd. Most North-South travel that occurs within Menzies is to or from one of these major East-West routes.
- Deakin is oriented around the clear East-West lines of transport that are: Whitehorse Rd, Canterbury Rd, and the Belgrave Lilydale Line. Once again most North-South travel in the area is too or from one of these major routes.
- The attached Bus route map demonstrates that most public transport in Deakin and Menzies networks operate in an East-West fashion, and that my proposal respects these modes of travel.
 - Since there are no trains and trams in Menzies, bus maps give an accurate picture of approximate travel patterns in that electorate.
 - As the bus map shows, there are two separate axes of transport in Maroondah, one above and one below the Maroondah HWY. This is as they are two separate communities of interest, above the Maroondah centred on Ringwood, below centred on Croydon. This allows Maroondah to be easily separated into two electorates, which my proposal suggests.



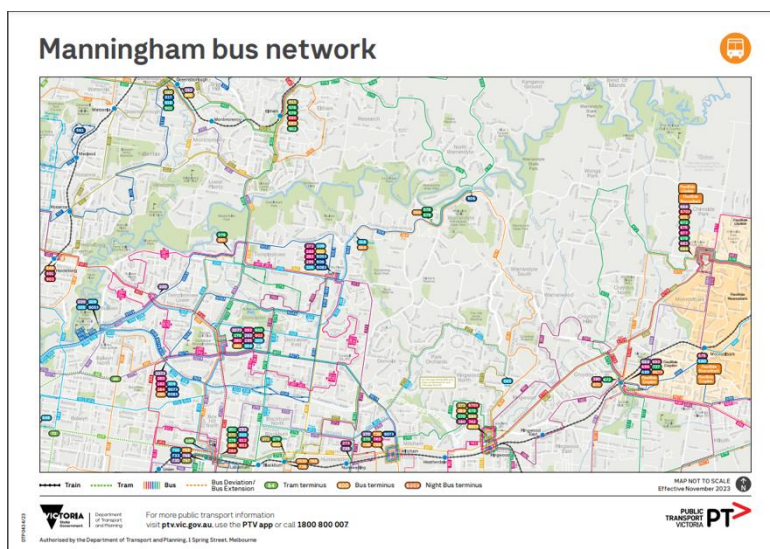


Fig 4: Manningham and Maroondah bus Maps – Note the clear axes of transport above and below the Maroondah Hwy

2.6 Benefits of my proposal – *Similar areas = Similar representation:*

The East-West orientation my proposal suggests also prevents the formation of “Franken-Seats” where both Menzies and Deakin take in such a diverse set of communities and urban landscape that one end of the electorate has extremely little in common with the other.

- For example, Warrandyte, Templestowe have extremely little in common with Box Hill, just as Park Orchards has little in common with Mitcham or Forrest Hill.
- Under my proposal, Menzies takes the more suburban areas of Deakin with larger homes, larger families, and a more established population, areas that have much in common with Templestowe and Bulleen.
 - For example, under my proposal Menzies takes in almost all the SA1 divisions in Deakin where 40% or more of the homes have four bedrooms or more, and places them in same division as Park Orchards, Donvale, Wonga Park, Warrandyte, and Templestowe, all of which mostly consist of SA1 divisions where 50% or more of households have four or more bedrooms.
- Deakin meanwhile takes in denser, more multicultural, and less established areas such as Box Hill and Blackburn, which have a lot more in common with Forest Hill and Ringwood.

As has been previously stated, the areas of Deakin above the Maroondah Hwy are less dense, and more established than those beneath it. This means they have more in common with Menzies than with Deakin.

This is primarily due to History. The areas above the Maroondah Hwy have historically been orchard areas, with a rural nature, those below were historically mining areas, with an industrial and dense makeup that continues to this day.

Fig 5: Flyover photograph Ringwood (1945). Note developed Croydon vs above the Maroondah Hwy, which was still rural at the time. Maroondah Hwy overlaid in red.

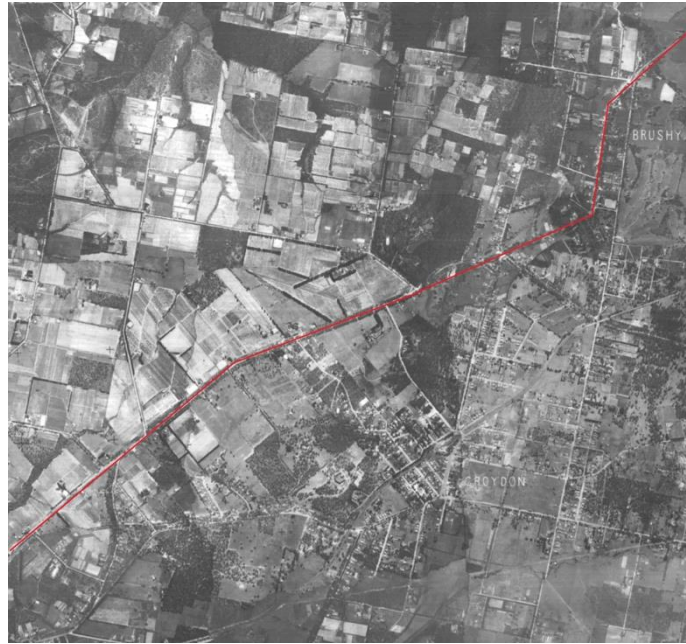
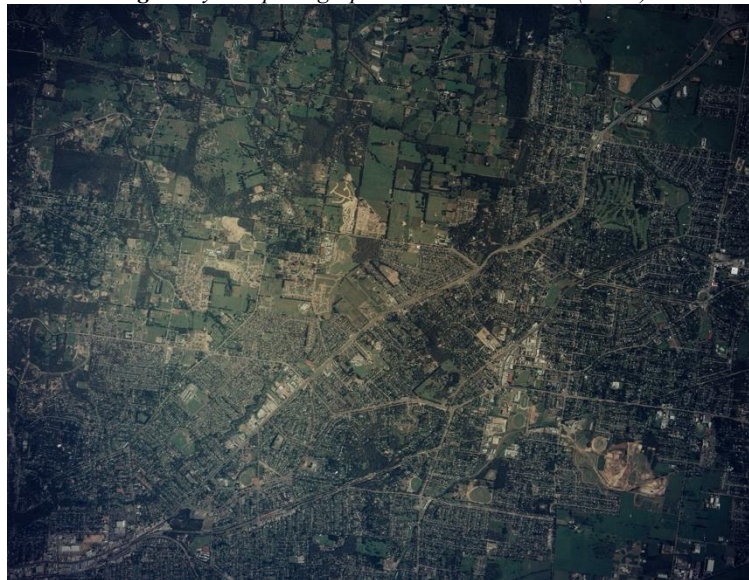


Fig 6: Flyover photograph Maroondah council (1980s)



2.7 Benefits of my proposal – *Similar zoning areas and similar service requirements = Similar representation:*

Zoning determines the type of houses that make up a neighbourhood now, and the type of houses that are allowed to make up an electorate in the future. As such, it is vital that electorates are relatively homogenous in zoning regulation, or at least the intention of their zoning regulation (i.e. uniting areas that are all zoned low density).

Let's focus on height restrictions. The current AEC draft unites the bulk of Manningham LGA, which is mostly General Residential Zone (which is height limited to about 2 storeys), with the bulk of Whitehorse LGA, which has large areas of Neighbourhood Residential Zone (no height limit), and sections that are even higher density.

Anecdotally, this has brought the bulk of Menzies, an outer metropolitan 2-storey height limit electorate, into the same electorate as the Box Hill Towers (the highest of which is currently 36

storeys, but applications are under way to build up to 50 storeys). This is mirrored in the AEC’s decision to put Ringwood North and Croydon Hills (also GRZ 2-storey limit areas) in the same electorate as Croydon proper and Ringwood proper (NRZ height unlimited areas). While these suburbs may share their first word, they are of completely different neighbourhood character. Hence, they belong in Menzies, which consists of Low-Density neighbourhoods.

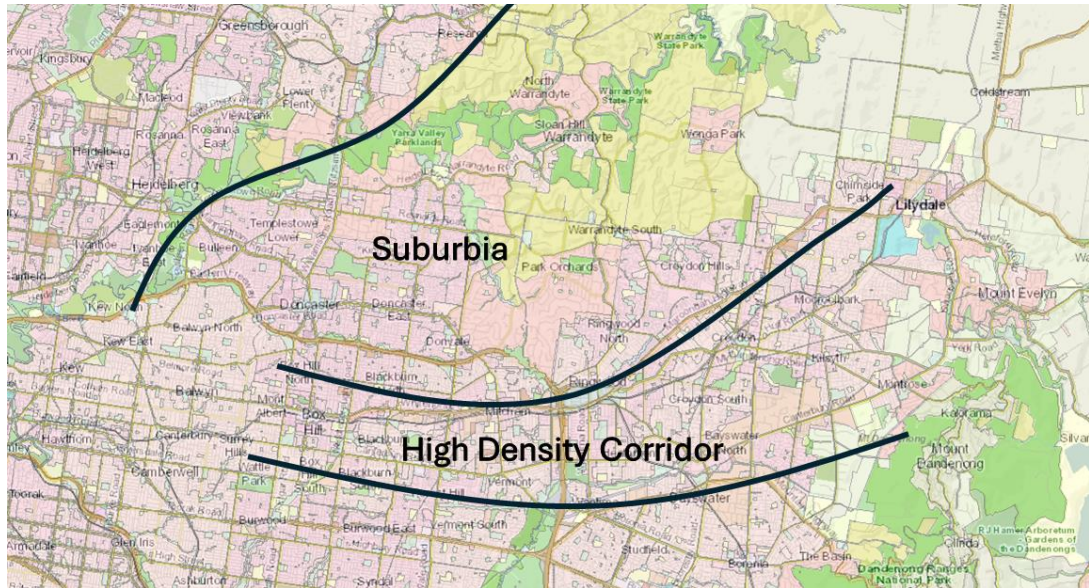


Fig 7: Zoning differences, Deakin vs Menzies under my proposal.

Because all the problems listed above are zoning issues, they are not just problems now, but problems in the future. It is inevitable that if the AEC draft is implemented, it will quickly have to be changed as both Deakin and Menzies will become disjointed communities.

My solution instead groups electorates by similar communities and neighbourhood characters. By making Deakin a high-density metropolitan electorate, and Menzies the 1-storey and 2-storey electorate, I have kept communities of interest together, and made sure that representation of the community is effective. My submission means that Deakin follows the NRZ “corridor” in the zoning plan, while Menzies follows the GRZ and other low-density zones above the Eastern Freeway and Maroondah Highway.

B] Addressing potential alternative proposals.

The problems with the current AEC proposal with respect to Deakin and Menzies are clear, and it is my assumption that many other proposals will suggest solutions to these problems. One solution which was proposed in earlier suggestions, but which is oversimplistic and fatally flawed, is to divide Deakin and Menzies between each other along Springvale Road. I want to address this idea quickly in this report. This idea is unworkable for several reasons.

- The quota numbers will not balance.
- Templestowe has a clear and obvious community of interest with Warrandyte, Park-Orchards, and Donvale, as a low-density green wedge suburb. This proposal idea completely isolates Templestowe from this COI, only my proposal balances the numbers in a way that keeps this COI undisturbed.
- It is a pointless rotation that turns Menzies into a high-density mixed use suburban seat, and Deakin into a green wedge seat. This exactly flips Menzies and Deakin, causing massive disruption to communities in both electorates, for no clear benefit to communities of interest. Menzies is already a green wedge seat under the 2022 boundaries, and Deakin is a high-density mixed use suburban seat, these communities of interest are already represented, all this switch would do is change the name on the electorate which represents them and cause disruption. It is not necessary.
- It completely ignores lines of transportation. It is obvious that very few people travel North-South from Templestowe to Box-Hill, or from Vermont-South to Warrandyte. Whereas people travel in large numbers East-West from Warrandyte to Doncaster to the Eastern Freeway, or from Croydon South to Box Hill.
- All arguments for this proposal have been purely anecdotal, and the data fails to back up these anecdotes. Even some of the anecdotes themselves have been refuted, such as claims about Wonga Park CFA's connection to the seat of Deakin in suggestion 22, which were refuted by the captain of the Wonga Park CFA himself in comment 25.

C] In Conclusion

I strongly encourage the committee to look at that data that backs up my proposal, and to implement it to the greatest extent possible. It would be consistent with previous boundaries for both seats. The current AEC draft proposal causes far more disruption than is necessary. My solution better aligns the electorates of Deakin and Menzies with transport patters, administrative boundaries, historical precedent, urban geography, and communities of interest.

I thank the committee for their consideration.

Regards,

Dot Haynes OAM