



Objection 174

Dr Mark Mulcair

23 pages

OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED 2024 VICTORIAN FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION

(Dr Mark Mulcair)

GENERAL COMMENTS:

In general, I think the Committee has done quite a good job. The inner eastern suburbs were the obvious place for a Division to be abolished, and the proposed arrangement allows for the northern and western Melbourne and regional Victoria to be left with minimal change.

Abolishing Higgins and dividing it between neighbouring seats was one option I had looked at when coming up with my original Suggestions, so I have no problem with the logic of this.

The Committee has also been able to undo some of the more problematic boundaries from the previous redistribution; in particular the messy split of Box Hill, and the northern and southern boundaries Chisholm. Whatever the final determination is, I think the Committee needs to ensure these positive changes are retained as much as possible.

ASSUMPTIONS:

When considering making my Objections, I have decided to assume that the fundamentals of the redistribution will not be changed. This means that:

- I accept that a Division will be abolished in the inner east, that some significant change will be needed throughout the eastern and south-eastern seats, and that rural Victoria and north-western Melbourne will see less change.
- I accept that Higgins is the Division to be abolished.
- I accept at a high level the flow on effects to neighbouring seats such as Kooyong, Chisholm, Macnamara and Hotham.

I am sure there will be many other submissions that will argue for the retention of Higgins, or propose a major redrawing throughout the eastern suburbs. I have instead tried to look for less-dramatic changes that I feel would still significantly improve community of interest.

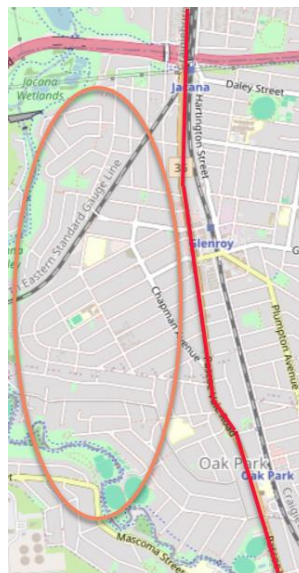
NORTH WESTERN MELBOURNE

Many of these Divisions were reasonably close to quota, and did not require major changes. However, there is one proposal that I do object to quite strongly, along with a number of much smaller suggestions.

OBJECTION 1: WILLS/MARIBYRNONG/CALLWELL/SCULLIN/McEWEN

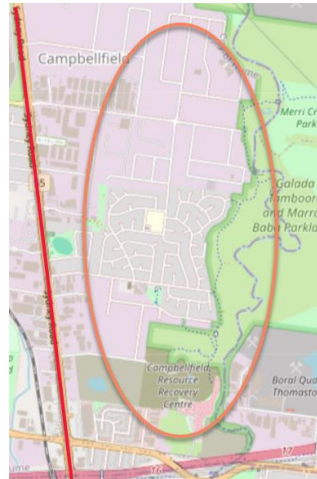
As a resident of Pascoe Vale, I must strongly object to the proposal to remove parts of Glenroy and Oak Park to the Division of Maribyrnong. While the arrangement may look good on a map, as a local I can say clearly that it is a very poor boundary 'on the ground':

- The western parts of Glenroy and Oak Park are almost completely isolated from the remainder of Maribyrnong by Moonee Ponds Creek, which lies in a valley and is surrounded by parklands and open space for most of its length.
- There is very limited communication across Moonee Ponds Creek at this point; in fact there is no road communication at all. Locals would need to travel along the boundary with Wills (Pascoe Vale Road) or Calwell (the Ring Road) to access the other parts of Maribyrnong.
- Pascoe Vale Road is not a strong boundary in this area; for example, the Glenroy Shopping Centre is grouped around both sides of Pascoe Vale Road. The proposed boundary would split this area completely in half.
- The roads in western Oak Park and Glenroy tend to loop back on themselves, emphasizing the lack of connection across the creek, and the orientation of community of interest to the east, not the west.



Further north, a similar scenario occurs, with the eastern parts of Campbellfield and Somerton being transferred from Calwell to Scullin. Again, these areas would be largely cut off from the rest of Scullin by a creek that has limited communication across it. This arrangement would also see the western parts of Campbellfield split off from their town centre on the eastern side of Sydney Road.

Possibly this was done purely to balance the numbers in Calwell, as it is hard to see a community of interest reason for this change.



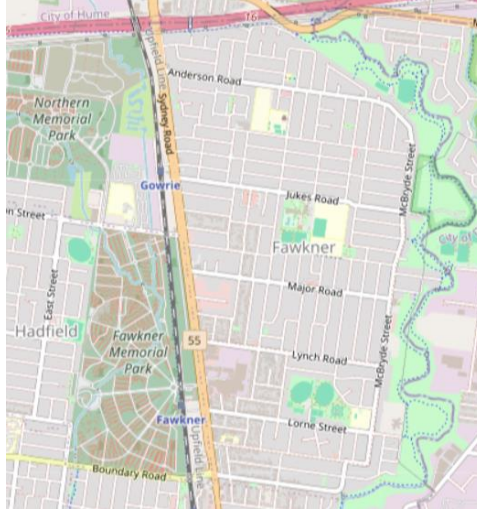
I am proposing a series of adjustments to address these issues, and achieve what I believe to be a stronger community of interest outcome:

1) Wills should retain all of Glenroy and Oak Park, and instead shed the entire suburb of Fawkner to the Division of Calwell.

Assuming some area in the north of Wills needs to be removed, I strongly believe that Fawkner is the best choice. The suburb is a somewhat discrete area, being bounded by Fawkner Cemetery to the west, Merri Creek to the east, and industrial/commercial areas to the south. As such, Fawkner's community of interest tends to look north into the southern parts of Calwell, such as Campbellfield, than to major centres in the rest of Wills.

Demographically, I also feel that Fawkner – which has not yet gentrified to the same extent as some other parts of Wills – fits better with a more diverse and working-class seat such as Calwell.

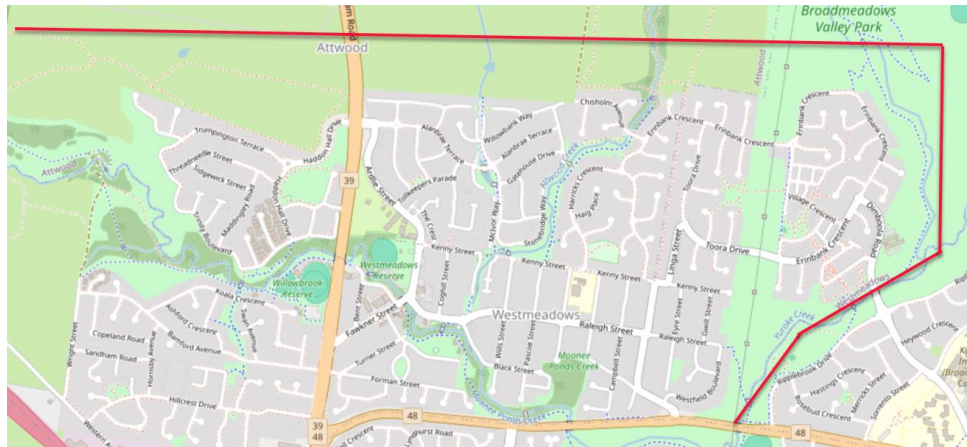
This arrangement would result in Calwell pushing south of the Ring Road, but there are some good north-south links along Sydney Road. I also note that the existing State District of Broadmeadows includes Fawkner, so there is plenty of precedent for a Campbellfield/Broadmeadows based seat including areas south of the Ring Road in this area.



WILLS	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	120,791	130,444
+ Oak Park (balance)	2768	3028
+ Glenroy West (balance)	4503	4916
- Fawkner	8472	9087
NEW PROPOSED	119,590	129,301

2) **Maribyrnong should make up its numbers by gaining Westmeadows and Atwood, from Calwell.**

If Oak Park and Glenroy remain in Wills, then Maribyrnong needs to make up its numbers somewhere else. I feel that the best arrangement is to add all of Westmeadows and Atwood, utilizing the open space along Broadmeadows Valley Park and under the airport flight path as a very clear and obvious boundary:



Both Westmeadows and Atwood have good links with Gladstone Park, Tullamarine, and other suburbs in the northern part of the existing Maribyrnong.

MARIBYRNONG	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	119,489	125,759
+ Gladstone Park – Westmeadows (balance)	7260	7464
- Oak Park (balance)	2768	3028
- Glenroy West (balance)	4503	4916
NEW PROPOSED	119,478	125,279

3) Calwell should re-gain all the balance of Somerton and Campbellfield.

This returns to the strong boundary of Merri Creek, which is surrounded by open space or commercial/industrial estates in this area, and re-unites the Campbellfield town centre with all of the rest of the suburb.

4) Scullin to gain further parts of Wollert from the Division of McEwen

I recommend extending the proposed boundary along Bridge Inn Road to follow Boundary Road as far as Merri Creek. This would unite further parts of Wollert that lie north of Craigieburn Road with their town centre and community of interest to the south.

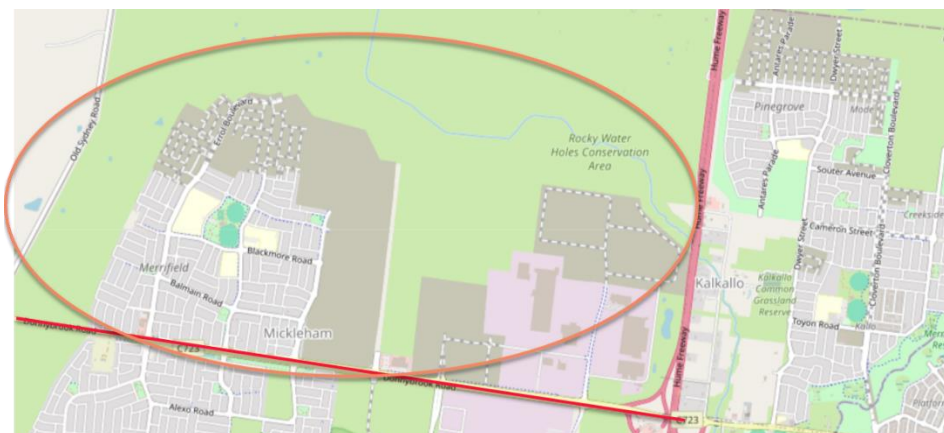
I feel this arrangement also helps better balance the growth in this area, with more of a rapidly-developing area being placed in a traditionally slower-growing Division.



SCULLIN	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	114,895	126,602
+ Wollert (south of Bridge Inn and Boundary Rds)	3084	7130
- Campbellfield – Coolaroo (balance)	2491	2444
NEW PROPOSED	115,488	131,288

5) McEwen to gain all of Mickleham that lies north of Donnybrook Road, from Calwell

The above exchanges leave Calwell over quota and McEwen under. However, this can be addressed by adopting Donnybrook Road as the new boundary between the two Divisions. The Committee has already proposed transferring Kalkallo into McEwen, so taking in the northern parts of Mickleham seems a fairly logical extension.



SOUTH-EASTERN MELBOURNE

I am not planning a major changes in the eastern suburbs. While there are some less-than-ideal arrangements in some boundaries, I feel that attempting to fix them would require a major redraw of this area, essentially beginning the redistribution from scratch. I think this would result in too big a change at this late stage.

Therefore, I am accepting that Higgins will be abolished, and that most of its territory will be taken up by the Division of Kooyong. I am not making any objections to this arrangement.

However, there are several changes that I think could be made to improve community of interest closer to the city, and in the south-eastern suburbs.

OBJECTION 3: GOLDSTEIN/HOTHAM/ISAACS/BRUCE

I feel there are several less-than-desirable outcomes with how these four seats are drawn:

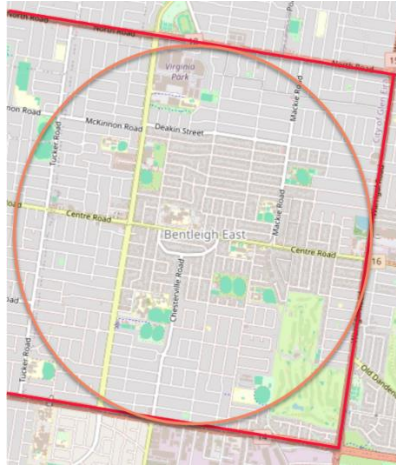
- The Division of Isaacs remains a ‘bits and pieces’ seat, and the addition of more territory around Keysborough and Noble Park only exacerbates its existing dual nature.
- The proposed boundary between Bruce and Isaacs runs right through the centre of Dandenong along Lonsdale Street. This is major urban CBD, and it seems logical to try to keep it united in one seat as much as possible.
- Some small changes have been made around Bentleigh East, but still not enough to unite the suburb with Bentleigh in Goldstein.

I suggest these issues can be addressed by rotating all four Divisions in a clockwise direction.

1) Goldstein gains all of Bentleigh East from Hotham.

This has been a common theme among Suggestions for the past several redistributions, with many comments noting that this area is out of place in Hotham and a much better fit in Goldstein.

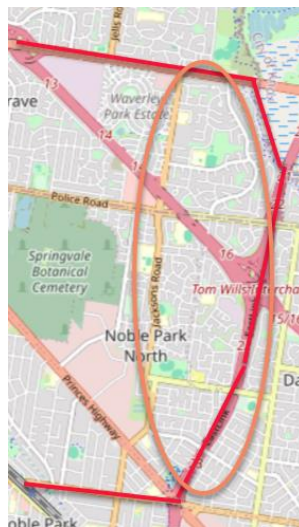
I suggest this change be made, by moving the eastern boundary to Warrigal Road between North Road and South Road. This would ensure all of Bentleigh East is placed in Goldstein, uniting it with Bentleigh itself plus Ormond and McKinnon:



2) Hotham should re-gain Springvale South and parts of Noble Park from Isaacs, and parts of Mulgrave and Noble Park North from Bruce

I suggest Hotham can then adjust its eastern boundary with Bruce to follow Eastlink, transferring around 6000 electors in Mulgrave and Noble Park North into the Division.

At the last redistribution, there was some objection to parts of Mulgrave being included in Bruce; my proposed changes allow all of the suburb to be united in Hotham. I also feel that Eastlink is a much stronger boundary in the area than Jacksons Road.



I also recommend Hotham's southern boundary be adjusted to follow the Dingley Bypass, Paterson Road, Henderson Road, and Corrigan Road. This returns Springvale South and a small part of Noble Park back to Hotham.

I feel the Dingley Bypass is a much stronger divide in this area than Heatherton Road, and that it makes enormous sense to unite Springvale South with Springvale itself.



HOTHAM	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	118,284	129,953
+ Noble Park North (balance)	3329	3435
+ Mulgrave (balance)	2914	3082
+ Dandenong North (west of Eastlink)	2028	2070
+ Springvale South (balance)	7198	7220
+ Noble Park – West (west of Corrigan Road)	2998	3160
- Bentleigh East - North	10,962	12,025
- Bentleigh East - South	6629	6862
NEW PROPOSED	119,160	130,033

3) **Bruce to regain central Dandenong**

The Committee’s proposed boundary in this area runs along Lonsdale Street, which results in the major commercial and business centre of Dandenong being split completely in half. This is a very poor outcome on community of interest grounds – Dandenong is a significant suburban CBD that should not be split unless absolutely necessary for numbers purposes.

If the Division of Bruce loses everything west of Eastlink, then it can regain central Dandenong, incorporating all of the residential and commercial areas around the CBD itself.

I suggest following Eastlink southwards to Dandenong Bypass, then following Dandenong Creek to the existing boundary along the railway line. This returns the ~3500 electors originally proposed to be transferred to Isaacs, and adds a further ~1000 south of the railway line:



I feel that this is a sensible arrangement. Using the creek as the boundary means that those parts of central Dandenong west of the railway line are united with the bulk of the CBD to the east. The creek also forms a fairly clear divide between the newer urban renewal development areas to the north, and the older residential communities to the south.

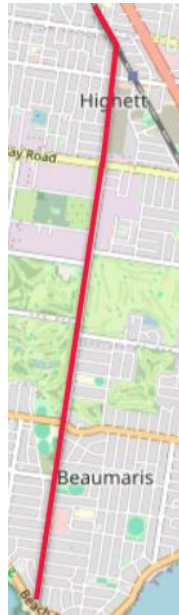
BRUCE	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	125,348	131,654
+ Dandenong – North	3410	3479
+ Dandenong – South (north of Dandenong Ck)	871	975
+ Noble Park East (east of Eastlink)	114	118
- Noble Park North (balance)	3329	3435
- Mulgrave (balance)	2914	3082
- Dandenong North (west of Eastlink)	2028	2070
NEW PROPOSED	121,472	127,639

4) Isaacs can gain territory from the south-east of Goldstein

The above changes leave Goldstein well over quota and Isaacs under, so an adjustment between these two Divisions is now needed.

The starting point should be for Isaacs to regain all of the territory proposed to be transferred to Goldstein (Moorabbin and Highett). This returns to the existing boundary along the railway line, which also serves as the LGA boundary.

I then suggest the boundary turn southwards through the former CSIRO site and then along Reserve Road, transferring almost all of Cheltenham and most of Beaumaris into Isaacs.



Cheltenham is currently split completely in half along the existing boundary, and using Reserve Road would allow all of the populated parts of the suburb to be united in a single seat. Beaumaris also has good links and is similar in character to Mentone and other coastal suburbs currently in Isaacs.

Reserve Road is surrounded by commercial estates and golf courses for large parts of its length, so would seem a very clear boundary on the ground in this area.

ISAACS	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	118,457	124,846
+ Moorabbin – East	4363	4626
+ Highett – Cheltenham (returned from Goldstein)	4025	4580
+ Highett – Cheltenham (east of Reserve Road)	3339	3425
+ Beaumaris (east of Reserve Road)	8242	8489
- Springvale South (balance)	7198	7220
- Noble Park – West (west of Corrigan Road)	2998	3160
- Dandenong – North	3410	3479
- Dandenong – South (north of Dandenong Ck)	871	975
- Noble Park East (east of Eastlink)	114	118
NEW PROPOSED	123,835	131,014

GOLDSTEIN	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	122,654	131,413
+ Bentleigh East - North	10,962	12,025
+ Bentleigh East - South	6629	6862
- Moorabbin – East	4363	4626
- Highett – Cheltenham (returned from Goldstein)	4025	4580
- Highett – Cheltenham (east of Reserve Road)	3339	3425
- Beaumaris (east of Reserve Road)	8242	8489
NEW PROPOSED	120,276	129,180

OBJECTION 4: MELBOURNE/MACNAMARA

I disagree strongly with the Committee's proposal to transfer South Yarra and Prahran into the Division of Melbourne:

- South Yarra and Prahran would seem to me to have a stronger connection to St Kilda and surrounding areas (in Macnamara), than north across the river into Richmond.
- The proposal would split Prahran (proposed to be placed in Melbourne) from Windsor (proposed to be placed in Macnamara). These two suburbs have a strong community of interest, and there has been considerable objection in the past when they have been separated into different seats.
- The Southbank, Docklands, and Fisherman's Bend areas are more suited to being placed in a CBD-based Division such as Melbourne.

I suggest that Melbourne and Macnamara instead swap most of this territory:

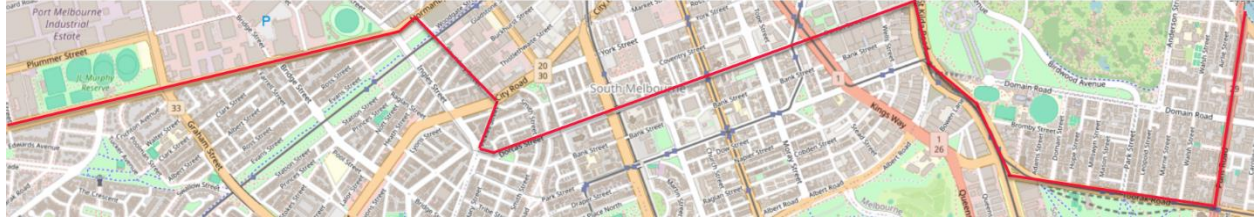
- 1) All of Southbank, Fishermans Bend, the balance of Docklands, and South Melbourne north of Dorcas Street, should be transferred from Macnamara to Melbourne.**

These are all areas of higher-density urban renewal and development, and lie directly across the river from the Melbourne CBD – in fact, Southbank and Docklands are effectively a part of the CBD. If we assume the CBD-based seat must cross the river, these areas seem a much more logical inclusion.

- 2) All of Prahran and most of South Yarra should be placed in Macnamara instead of Melbourne.**

It makes enormous sense to me to unite Prahran with Windsor (currently in Macnamara), and South Yarra has strong links with both suburbs. At recent redistributions, many submissions have recommended placing all or most of South Yarra, Prahran, and Windsor in the Division of Macnamara.

The new boundary would extend from the river along Punt Road, Toorak Road, St Kilda Road, Dorcas Street, Boundary Road, and Williamstown Road. I feel this provides a fairly clear boundary between “inner city” Melbourne and the inner south-eastern suburbs:



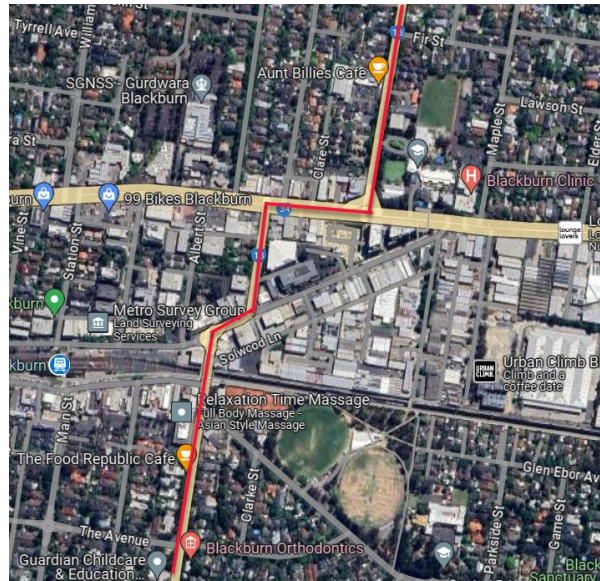
MELBOURNE	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	113,439	126,519
+ Southbank West	3234	3582
+ Southbank East	7266	7885
+ Docklands (balance)	1683	2066
+ Port Melbourne Industrial	1258	2287
+ South Melbourne (north of Dorcas Street)	3543	3827
- South Yarra West (south of Toorak Rd)	1660	1843
- South Yarra North	6921	7720
- South Yarra South	7023	7205
- Prahran (proposed in Melbourne)	4628	4802
NEW PROPOSED	110,191	124,596

MACNAMARA	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	113,403	122,946
+ South Yarra West (south of Toorak Rd)	1660	1843
+ South Yarra North	6921	7720
+ South Yarra South	7023	7205
+ Prahran (proposed in Melbourne)	4628	4802
- Southbank West	3234	3582
- Southbank East	7266	7885
- Docklands (balance)	1683	2066
- Port Melbourne Industrial	1258	2287
- South Melbourne (north of Dorcas Street)	3543	3827
NEW PROPOSED	116,651	124,869

OBJECTION 5: MENZIES/DEAKIN

Assuming no major changes in this area, I think a smaller adjustment could be beneficial to clear up two issues between these seats.

Firstly, the proposed boundary still splits Blackburn along Blackburn Road. This is not a strong boundary in the area, particularly as it makes several dog-legs through the centre of Blackburn itself.



Secondly, I feel that the removal of the south-eastern part of Menzies now leaves Warrandyte somewhat isolated and cut off from some of its communities of interest. While there are good links back towards Templestowe, other nearby suburbs such as Ringwood North and Park Orchards are now entirely in Deakin.

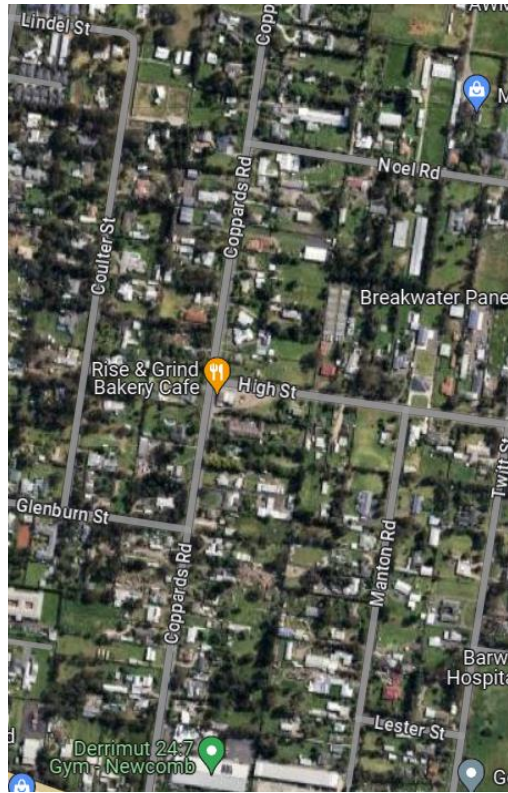
Therefore, I suggest the two Divisions swap territory.

- The block bounded by Canterbury Road, Springvale Road, Whitehorse Road and Blackburn Road should be transferred from Deakin to Menzies. This unites central Blackburn in one seat, and Springvale Road is a much more significant boundary than Blackburn Road in the area.
- All of Warrandyte and surrounds be transferred from Menzies to Deakin. I feel this area now fits better with the north-eastern parts of Deakin such as Park Orchards, Ringwood North, Warranwood, and Warrandyte South.

These numbers balance extremely well, leaving both Divisions well within tolerance.

DEAKIN	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	124,392	130,314
+ Warrandyte – Wonga Park	4698	4512
- Blackburn (south of Whitehorse Road)	2221	2307
- Forest Hill (west of Springvale Road, north of Canterbury Road)	936	1018
- Nunawading (west of Springvale Road, south of Whitehorse Road)	762	844
NEW PROPOSED	125,171	130,657

MENZIES	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	120,713	128,860
+ Blackburn (south of Whitehorse Road)	2221	2307
+ Nunawading (west of Springvale Road, south of Whitehorse Road)	936	1018
+ Forest Hill (west of Springvale Road, north of Canterbury Road)	762	844
- Warrandyte – Wonga Park	4698	4512
NEW PROPOSED	119,934	128,517



As in my original Suggestions, I recommend moving this boundary to Moolap Station Road. Not only would this unite the area immediately around Coppards Road, it would take advantage of the open space between Newcomb and Leopold (essentially, the boundary between ‘Geelong’ and ‘The Peninsula’) as a clearer divide:



CORIO	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	120,410	124,168
+ Newcomb - Moolap	1,420	1,450
NEW PROPOSED	121,830	125,618

CORANGAMITE	Existing	Projected
Committee proposed	106,695	127,797
- Newcomb - Moolap	1,420	1,450
NEW PROPOSED	105,275	126,347

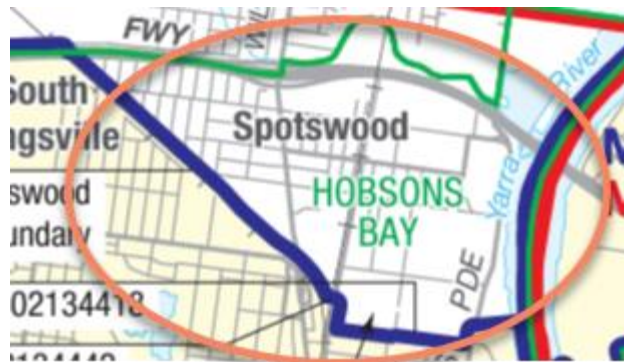
OBJECTIONS FOR WHICH I HAVE NO SOLUTION

The comments below relate to boundaries that I feel could be tidied up to provide a better outcome, but where I am unable to find an easy way to do this.

If other Objections or proposals were able to address these scenarios, I would probably be inclined to support them.

GELLIBRAND/FRASER:

The Committee proposes to use West Gate Freeway for most of the boundary between these two seats, but then deviates southwards to take in parts of Spotswood and Newport:



Ideally I feel it would be good to maintain the freeway as the boundary, but given the strength of Fraser's other boundaries, it is hard to see where compensating changes could be made.

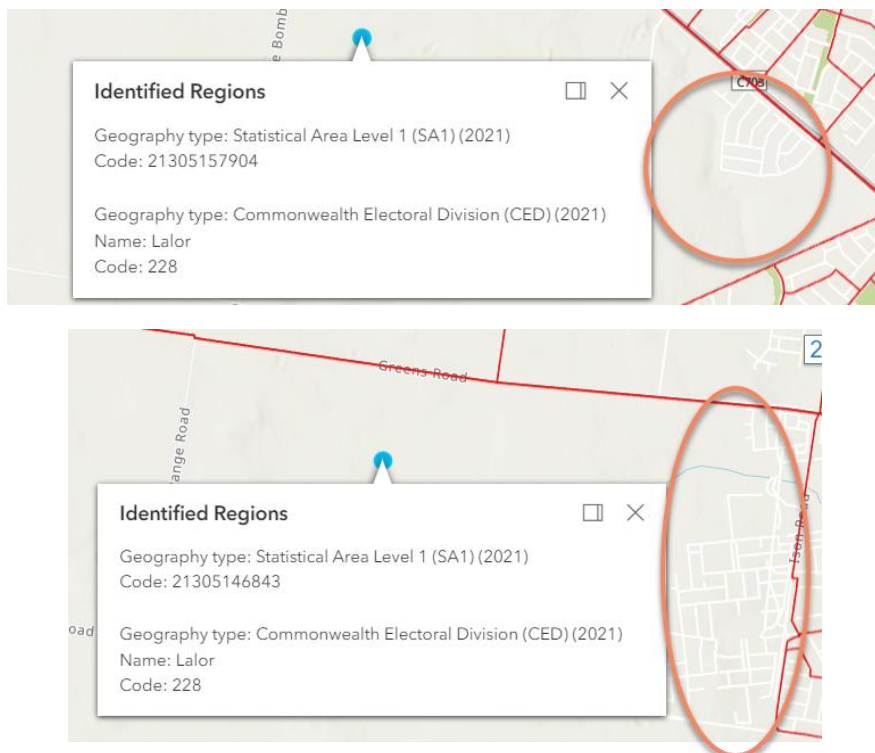
LALOR/HAWKE/CORIO:

I have no problem with Corio gaining Little River, but the Committee's proposed boundaries push right up into the Wyndham growth area.

Both the boundaries of Lalor/Hawke and Lalor/Corio are proposed to follow SA1 boundaries, which are not very clear on the ground:



Both of these boundaries are already seeing urban growth spill over. This results in a small number of residents around Manor Lakes and Mambourin being isolated from their community of interest, and being linked with Geelong or Melton based seats:



Unfortunately, since the Division of Lalor has been set to the minimum tolerance currently and maximum tolerance in the future, even a minor change to the proposed boundaries would force the seat outside quota. I have been unable to find an arrangement that works here.

CASEY/MCEWEN

The proposed new boundary between these two Divisions appears to run right through the centre of St Andrews along SA1 boundaries. However, since Casey is set to be at the bottom of tolerance, it is not possible to lose this area without having to make gains elsewhere, and I cannot find an easy way to do this.

The entire boundary in this area is quite awkward; it includes most of St Andrews in Casey, but Panton Hill is placed in McEwen and Kangaroo Ground in left in Jagajaga. This means that the main communication link between St Andrews and the rest of Casey (Eltham – Yarra Glen Road and St Andrews – Kangaroo Ground Road) travels through two different Divisions before returning into Casey again. I feel this leaves St Andrews very isolated within Casey.

I explored a number of options in this area, but it seems impossible to me to unite this area in a single seat; there will be a messy split somewhere unless there is a more significant redraw of Casey, McEwen and Jagajaga.

OBJECTIONS TO THE PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSALS

In the past, Redistribution Committees would outline their redistribution proposals in geographical order. E.g. in Victoria, the narrative would usually begin at the edges of the state and work inwards, or at a ‘constrained’ Melbourne seat and work outwards. This approach meant that the logic of the Committee’s decisions was easy to follow – readers could step-by-step through each Division and clearly understand how the proposals for one seat impacted those around it.

However in recent times, the Committees have taken to presenting their proposals alphabetically by Division. In my opinion, I think this makes it harder to follow the Committee’s proposals – the narrative constantly jumps around different parts of the state, and major decisions for one seat may not be fully explained until much later in the proposals.

I believe especially when there is a redistribution with some major changes – such as this one – the decisions might be more acceptable to the public if the bigger picture was easier to understand. I think working through the proposals in a geographical manner would help with this enormously.