



Objection 280

City of Stonnington

2 pages

25 June 2024

The Australian Electoral Commission
Attn: Redistribution Secretariat
Locked Bag 4007
Canberra ACT 2601

Dear Secretariat

Re: Proposed electoral boundaries of Higgins electorate

I write on behalf of the Council of the City of Stonnington (Stonnington) to object to the proposed electoral boundaries for the adjacent electorates into which Higgins electors will be transferred.

The Council notes that Electors from the seat of Higgins will be transferred to the electorates of Chisholm, Hotham, Kooyong, Macnamara, and Melbourne. The Australian Electoral Commission Redistribution Committee for Victoria (the Committee) has outlined in its report that:

- “As a result of this redistribution, in a number of cases, localities or LGAs are united within one, or are shared between fewer, electoral divisions”; and that they
- “avoid splitting LGAs, particularly in rural areas, noting these can be strong and recognisable boundaries, [but] accept that splitting LGAs or localities may be appropriate where doing so provides for a strong physical boundary and/or a clearer community of interest, or where doing so meets the numerical requirements of the Electoral Act”.

The Stonnington LGA will change under the proposal from being in one federal electorate to five, despite being only 25 square kilometres in size. It is unusual for an LGA so small to be split across so many federal electorates.

At its meeting of 24 June 2024, the Council resolved to endorse the following observations relating to the proposed re-distribution. The proposal:

- Severely fragments local communities of interest represented by Local Government Authorities (LGAs), suburbs and localities.
- Ignores major existing physical and geographical boundaries such as freeways, arterial roads and waterways.

- Fails to identify and align with economic and social groupings.
- Erases deep historical and cultural connections between the Stonnington community and the Higgins electorate.
- Gives rise to confusion and uncertainty among Stonnington residents who will be divided and dispersed among five (5) different Federal Electorates.
- Fails to recognise the importance of the Higgins Electorate to the local identity of residents and its importance to their connection and ongoing engagement in the national democratic system.

Council would welcome the committee considering a boundary redistribution that will have Stonnington LGA in a single electorate or split across a smaller number of electoral boundaries.

Yours sincerely



Dale Dickson PSM
Chief Executive Officer
City of Stonnington