



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Objection 33

Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup

2 pages

Ref: OCOR63181
Enq: Director Finance and Corporate



26 June 2024

Australian Electoral Commission (Attn: WA Redistribution Secretariat)
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Dear Redistribution Committee Members

SUBMISSION (OBJECTION) – PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INTO ELECTORAL DIVISIONS

The Donnybrook-Balingup Shire Council has resolved to lodge an objection to the proposal to transfer **all the land within the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup from the electoral division of Forrest to the electoral division of O'Connor.**

Council's position is that the whole of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup should remain within the electoral division of Forrest as the prescribed factors to be taken into account by the AEC when reviewing electoral comprehensively show that the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup has a greater strength of community interest, communication and transport links to the Forrest electorate as opposed to the O'Connor electorate.

The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup has a strong community of interest with the Forrest electorate, having been within this electorate since its inception in 1922. In particular residents of our Shire have a strong community of interest with the regional centre of Bunbury as well as other towns such as Bunbury, Australind/Eaton, Harvey and Capel. This community of interest is both historical and current and encompasses a wide range of commercial and community matters including agricultural uses and associated servicing, business linkages, sporting associations, education, etc.

Similarly, communication links are linked to Bunbury and other nearby communities, such as Commonwealth and State Government offices/agencies, retail/commerce as well as transport links.

Land use patterns within the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup are similar to other districts within the Forrest electorate, including a high proportion of rural residential subdivision and "lifestyle" lots. The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup has experienced consistent population growth over the last 10 years and this growth is consistent with other areas in Forrest. Issues relating to population growth, such as

town planning, building control, demand for new infrastructure and services, etc. are consistent with the issues addressed throughout the Forrest electorate and are not as critical in the majority of the O'Connor electorate.

The physical characteristics of the Donnybrook-Balingup district are more consistent with the Forrest electorate than with the majority of the O'Connor electorate, being characterized by undulating terrain, river valleys, State Forest and other crown land.

The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup has minimal community of interest with the O'Connor electorate other than the areas immediately adjacent – such as the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes and Shire of Manjimup. O'Connor is a vast electorate, currently encompassing land from Bridgetown in the west, Albany in the south, Esperance in the east and Ngaanyatjarraku (Warburton) in the north. It is a diverse area with a focus on agriculture and mining and whilst some areas have similar characteristics to Donnybrook-Balingup the majority do not.

Electors within the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup will have reduced access to their Member of Parliament if transferred to the O'Connor electorate. The Member for Forrest has her electorate office in Bunbury whereas the Member for O'Connor has a principal office in Kalgoorlie and secondary offices in Esperance, Albany and Manjimup.

Taking into account the reduced community of interest with the O'Connor electorate it appears that balancing the elector numbers to fit into the redistribution quotas required under legislation has been the sole determination that has led to the proposal to transfer the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup to O'Connor.

There are numerous scenarios that could be considered to ensure that redistribution quotas are met across all electoral divisions however for the purpose of this submission (objection) Council has restricted its submission to that of simply requesting that the whole of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup remains in the electoral division of Forrest.

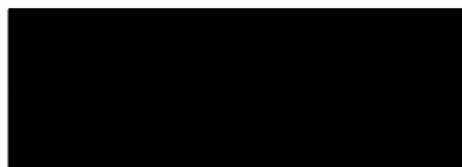
The Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup wishes to make it clear that the Shire's opposition to being transferred into the electoral division of O'Connor should not be interpreted as a view towards the current Member for O'Connor. That member is well known across the regions and has served his electorate well since first being elected to Parliament in 2013.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Yours faithfully



Cr Vivienne MacCarthy
SHIRE PRESIDENT



Dr Garry Hunt PSM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (TEMPORARY)