

Objections to Draft Boundaries Submission

on behalf of the

Liberal Party
of Australia

to the

Augmented Electoral
Commission for
Victoria

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1. Maps were produced from CDATA96© (Australian Bureau of Statistics) and MapInfo *Professional* V6.5© software.
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INTRODUCTION

This submission is made in response to the Redistribution Commission for Victoria's invitation for interested persons or organisations to lodge written objections against the proposed redistribution with the Australian Electoral Commission as published on 30 August 2002.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The Liberal Party has taken careful note of the guidelines set out by the Redistribution Committee for making written objections. In particular, the Liberal Party is aware that any suggestion or objection to a boundary for a particular Division must directly relate to the provisions of Section 66(3) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918, namely:

In making the proposed redistribution, the Redistribution Committee:

- (a) Shall, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure that, if the State or Territory were redistributed in accordance with the proposed redistribution, the number of electors enrolled in each Electoral Division in the State or Territory would not, 3 years and 6 months after the State or Territory had been redistributed, be less than 96.5% or more than 103.5% of the average divisional enrolment of that State or Territory at that time; and*
- (b) **SUBJECT** to paragraph (a), shall give due consideration, in relation to each proposed Electoral Division, to:*
 - (i) community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests;*
 - (ii) means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division;*
 - (iii) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and*
 - (iv) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory,*

and subject thereto the quota of electors for the State or Territory shall be the basis for the proposed redistribution, and the Redistribution Committee may adopt a margin of allowance, to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall the quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-tenth more or one-tenth less.

Further evidence of what is essential in defining new boundaries during Redistribution was established by the immediate past Redistribution Committee for Victoria when it stated:

*'The criteria set out in sub-section 66(3)(b) of the Act – community of interests, means of communication and travel, physical features and area, and boundaries of existing Divisions – are **subordinate** to the objective of enrolments in proposed divisions...' – 1994 Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, page 134, section 18.*

Consequently, all suggestions contained in this submission relate to one or more of these provisions. All of the Liberal Party's suggestions made are intended to enhance community of interest within the Federal Divisions the Redistribution Commission for Victoria has proposed.

It is the intention of the Liberal Party to recognise the principles contained in the boundaries proposed by the Redistribution Committee, and to suggest a variety of enhancements that will improve the overall structure and community of interest, including the sustainability of the Divisions. All the suggested enhancements contained in this document have been put forward bearing in mind the strict requirements binding the Redistribution Committee regarding the dual population levels in each Division.

‘COMMUNITY OF INTEREST’ AS A CONCEPT

As was stated in the Liberal Party’s original submission to the Redistribution Committee for Victoria, it is virtually impossible to establish a precise definition for what may constitute a ‘community of interest.’ The reference to “...economic, social and regional interests” in Section 66(3)(b)(i) of the Act would tend to suggest that Divisions should not, where possible, include electors from radically different communities.

However, this does not mean the concept should be used to create a contrived form of social homogeneity in electorates.

In our suggested enhancements, we have considered ‘community of interest’ to be something denoted by clear community facilities, such as shopping districts, schools, local government areas and boundaries which are created by major highways, main roads, rivers and train routes. In rural and regional parts of the state, it is also worth considering major regional centres or district centres as another defining aspect of a ‘community of interest.’ Individual members of the public who share facilities like these are likely to identify themselves as part of a ‘community’, even though that community may embrace a wide range of socio-economic cohorts.

Road networks also create linkages of community of interest. In particular, our proposed changes to the district of Indi reflect a transport corridor, which emphasise these communities of interest.

The Liberal Party recognises that none of these items are set in concrete, and there will invariably be times where population considerations demand a boundary be drawn in a position that is not ideal for all electors affected. However, the above factors normally provide the best guide for determining a community of interest, and many of our enhancements are based around these types of facilities.

What follows is an outline of the enhancements we have made to seventeen Federal Divisions, all intended to improve community of interest and representation. In many cases, the changes are very minor, and are a direct result of enhancements made to a neighbouring Division.

DETAILED OBJECTIONS TO SELECTED DIVISIONS OF THE 2002 PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF VICTORIA INTO ELECTORAL DIVISIONS

Aston/Deakin/Menzies:

- Transfer CCD 2361305 from Deakin to Aston.
Transfer CCDs 2171101, 2171102, 2171103 and 2171211 from Deakin to Menzies.

This would result in new populations of:

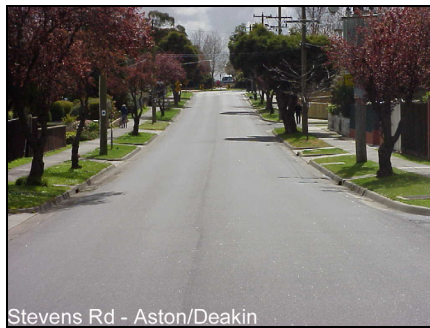
ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
Aston	86347	-1.98%	91807	-2.21%
Deakin	90431	2.65%	93833	-0.05%
Menzies	88341	0.33%	92662	-1.30%

- Argument:

The inclusion of one suburban block (CCD 2361305) from the suburb of Forest Hill appears to unnecessarily separate neighbours in the draft boundaries. The use of Stevens & Husband Roads also divides the local shops and the key catchment areas of the Parkmore Primary School and St Timothys Catholic Centre.

The Redistribution Committee themselves, have stated in their report that: ***“...the Committee adopted the view that it is highly desirable that electoral boundaries be readily recognisable. Accordingly, the Committee was guided by Local Government boundaries, locality boundaries, main roads, railways, waterways and other lineal features as boundaries, wherever possible.”*** - 2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, Report of the Redistribution Committee for Victoria, Section 17, Page 4.

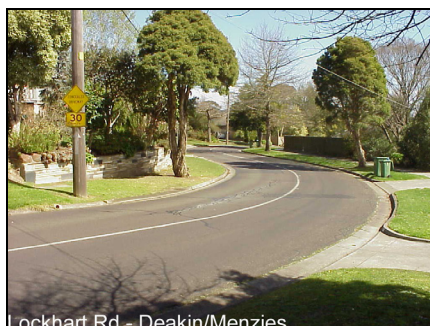
As the photo's below indicate, the use of both Stevens and Husband Roads do not fall within any of the parameters the Redistribution Committee have established.



The Redistribution Committee has also established another principle in their Proposed Redistribution report when it was stated that: ***“In fulfilling its statutory duty, the Committee was mindful of areas of.....and guided by boundaries of a municipal district, wherever possible, as indicators of community of interest”*** - 2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, Report of the Redistribution Committee for Victoria, Section 29, Page 7.

The Liberal Party believes that the Redistribution Committee has adhered to this with the uniting of both the suburbs of Burwood East with the Whitehorse LGA boundary in the southwest and Heathmont with the Maroondah LGA in the Division of Deakin. What is puzzling though is why this same principle has been disregarded with the redrawn northern boundary of Deakin, causing the suburb of Ringwood North and its community of interest to be unnecessarily broken. A selection of very minor roads and lanes has been used to redraw a new boundary between Deakin and Menzies.

Keeping in mind the Redistribution Committee also stated - ***“...the Committee adopted the view that it is highly desirable that electoral boundaries be readily recognisable. Accordingly, the Committee was guided by Local Government boundaries, locality boundaries, main roads, railways, waterways and other lineal features as boundaries, wherever possible.”*** - ***2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, Report of the Redistribution Committee for Victoria, Section 17, Page 4,*** below is a selection of photos of the actual roads and lanes proposed to be used as the Federal boundary between Deakin and Menzies which do not adhere to either of the principles established by the Redistribution Committee.



These chosen roads and lanes clearly show that if these are to be the final boundary between Deakin and Menzies, it would be clearly dividing a homogeneous community into two. Community facilities, such as kindergartens, schools, sporting ovals, churches and even residential streets are split between two electorates. The people in the northern part of Ringwood identify themselves clearly as belonging to the same community. There are no services to the north so all consumers and residential traffic must travel either south along Glenvale Road or east to Warrandyte Road.

The very design of the suburban streets in this area are such that residents are naturally fed into common parts of North Ringwood for their schooling, shopping and medical services. For example in this area we have:

- Shops (Warrandyte Road acts as a hub centre for local shopping)
- Dental and Medical Services (North Ringwood Medical Centre, Betta Health Medical Centre and Norwood Medical Centre)
- Children's playground at Hubbard Reserve (now proposed to be divided)
- Scout Hall at Hubbard Reserve
- Schools (Ringwood North and Ringwood Heights)
- Senior Citizen's Centre (Norwood Reserve, Warrandyte Road)
- Community House in Oban Road for the area
- Kindergartens and Child Care Centres (North Ringwood Child Care, Superkids Child Care – Warrandyte Road)
- North Ringwood Pre-School in Lockhart St (a proposed boundary)
- Pinemount Pre-school in Hygeia Parade.

A much more sensible option and one which would consolidate community of interest as well as adhere to the community of interest argument with local government boundaries that has been established by the Redistribution Committee, would be to follow the Maroondah Local Government boundary around to Warrandyte Rd and back to and along Oban Rd to the current draft boundary proposed. The use of these two major roads would provide a more effective and clearly defined boundary as they are both significant community dividers.



If the Liberal Party suggestions for the Divisions of Aston, Deakin and Menzies were adopted by the augmented Electoral Commission, it will provide less voter confusion, less voter movement, more definable boundaries, stronger communities of interest and also allow the final boundaries to be entirely consistent with the parameters and principles established by the Redistribution Committee in their report on the 2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions.

Batman/Melbourne:

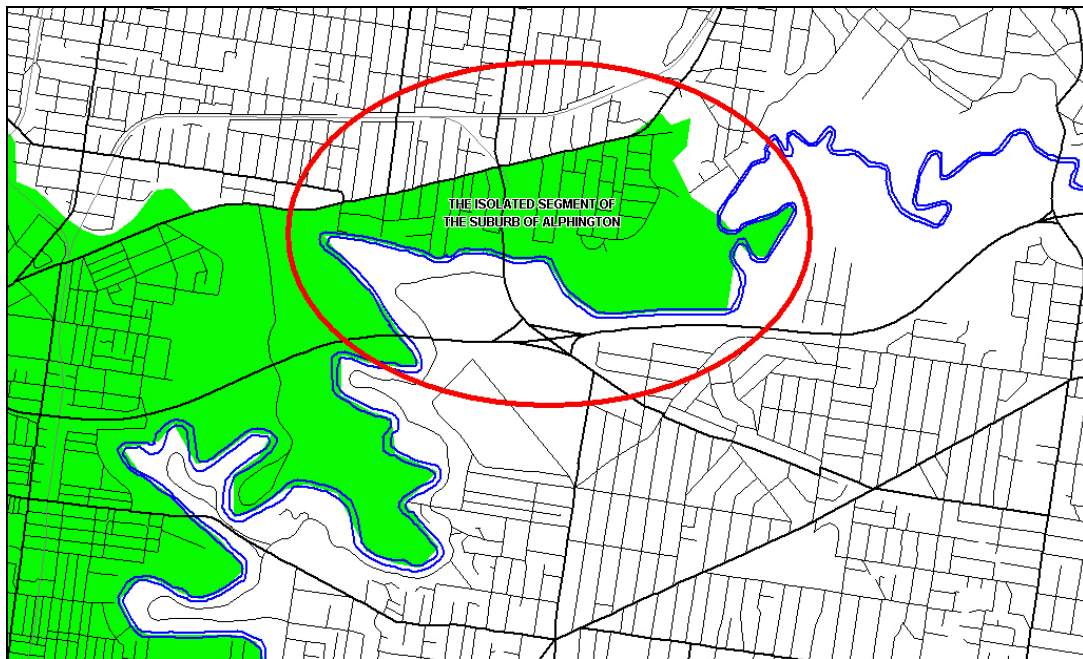
- Transfer CCDs 2291707, 2291708, 2291709 and part CCD 2291702 from Melbourne to Batman.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
Batman	89438	1.53%	93413	-0.50%
Melbourne	86925	-1.33%	94540	0.70%

- Argument:

The southern boundary of the proposed Division of Batman by the Redistribution Committee would isolate approximately 1,350 electors from the suburb of Alphington. Whilst the Liberal Party generally supports the principle of following Local Government boundaries, in this case we believe a stronger argument can be made for maintaining the existing Federal boundary with the Division of Melbourne to continue rather than split the community of interest in Alphington.



There is no doubt that the transport links in the area lead its residents into sharing a community of interest with their fellow Alphington residents on the north side of Heidelberg Road. This area would be partially isolated as the only area North or East of Merri Creek in the Division of Melbourne.

Corangamite/Wannon:

- Transfer part of CCD 2171101 from Wannon to Corangamite.

This would result in no population changes.

- Argument:

As the major defining feature of the Division of Corangamite and given the derivation of its name, there is no reason why Lake Corangamite should be in any other Division other than Corangamite.

“Corangamite - Name Derivation: *Named after Lake Corangamite. The name of the lake originated from the Aboriginal word for ‘bitter’, describing the salt content of the lake”*
(source: National Electoral Division Profiles, as at August 2001 produced by the AEC).

Gellibrand/Maribyrnong:

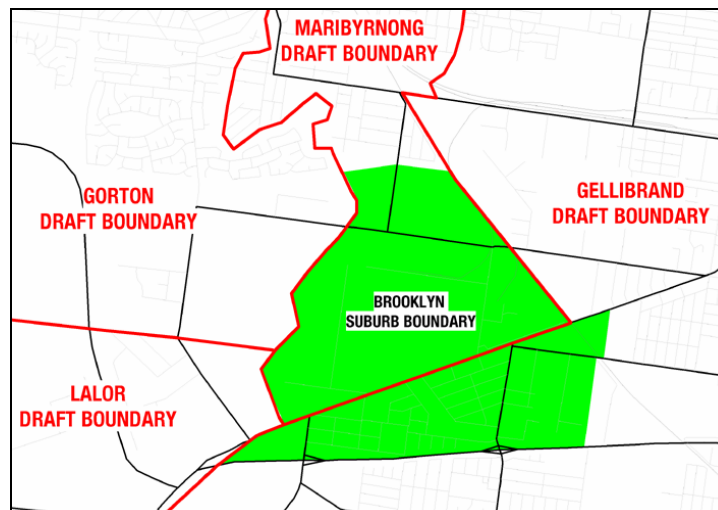
- Transfer part of CCD 2130806 from Maribyrnong to Gellibrand.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
Gellibrand	92473	4.97%	96695	3.00%
Maribyrnong	92663	5.19%	95277	1.49%

- Argument:

While the draft boundary proposed between the Divisions of Gellibrand and Maribyrnong by the Redistribution Committee follows the Brimbank Local Government boundary, the Liberal Party believes a more appropriate boundary could be found. The Liberal Party generally supports the principle of following Local Government boundaries but in this case we believe a stronger argument to reduce voter confusion and enhance community of interest can be made for following the Brooklyn suburb boundary south of William St (as per the 2002 Melway, Edition 29). This will then allow the entire suburb of Brooklyn to be located in the one Division (Gellibrand).



Gippsland/McMillan:

- Transfer CCDs 2180101, 2180102, 2180103, 2180104, 2180105, 2180106, 2180107, 2180108, 2180109, 2180110, 2181105, 2181106, 2181107, 2181108, 2181109, 2181110, 2181111, 2181201, 2181301, 2181302, 2181303, 2181304, 2181305, 2181306, 2181307, 2181308, 2181309, 2181310, 2181401, 2181402, 2181403, 2181406, 2181407, 2181408, 2181409, 2181902, 2181904, 2181908, 2181909 and part CCDs 2181101, 2181102, 2181103, 2181404, 2181405 from McMillan to Gippsland.

Transfer CCDs 2200201, 2200202, 2200203, 2200204, 2200205, 2200206, 2200207, 2200208, 2200209, 2200210, 2200211, 2200212, 2200213, 2200214, 2200215, 2200216, 2200302, 2200303, 2200304, 2200404, 2200405, 2200406, 2200407, 2200408, 2200501, 2200502, 2200503, 2200504, 2200505, 2200506, 2200507, 2200508, 2200509, 2200511, 2200601, 2200604, 2200610, 2200906, 2200909, 2200910, 2201001, 2201002, 2201003, 2201004, 2201005, 2201006, 2201007, 2201008, 2201009, 2201010, 2201011, 2201012, 2201013, 2201014, 2201015, 2390206 and part CCDs 2200907, 2200908, 2201105, 2201108 from Gippsland to McMillan.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
Gippsland	90640	2.89%	91964	-2.04%
McMillan	80436	-8.69%	95303	1.51%

- Argument:

The Liberal Party commends the draft boundaries in part for the proposed Divisions of Gippsland and McMillan by the Redistribution Committee for the reason that it strengthens the communities of interest in both these Divisions. However, the Liberal Party still believes the augmented Electoral Commission has the opportunity to additionally enhance McMillan and Gippsland in a fashion that will ensure long term electoral stability and further strengthen the communities of interest throughout the entire Gippsland region.

For 35 years between its creation in 1949 and the Redistribution of 1984, McMillan ran from its existing northern boundary to the coast to include Wonthaggi and its immediate surrounds, and excluded Traralgon to the Division of Gippsland.

Morwell and Traralgon are linked with other regional centres such as Sale, Maffra, Bairnsdale and Orbost in Gippsland by the Princes Highway, and serve as major commercial centres for those living in outlying rural areas. Added to this is the fact that the townships of Inverloch, Leongatha, Wonthaggi and Korumburra are an integral part of the local economy in West Gippsland, as they all serve as centres for the dairy and agricultural industries.

It is based on these communities of interest that the Liberal Party suggests to the augmented Electoral Commission that Morwell should be relocated into Gippsland with Traralgon and that the southern boundary of McMillan should be extended to the coast.

By adopting this change, the augmented Electoral Commission has the opportunity of further strengthening the communities of interest through the Gippsland region and build on the solid framework initiated by the Redistribution Committee for Victoria.

Holt/La Trobe:

- Transfer part of CCD 2342402 from Holt to La Trobe.

This would result in no population changes.

- Argument:

The inclusion of the entire CCD 2342402 in the draft boundaries of Holt has caused the Berwick campus of Monash University to be entirely isolated by the Princes Freeway with the remainder of the Holt Division.

The initial decision on where to build the Berwick campus of Monash University was made with a number of reasons in mind:

- the site is close to the railway station at Berwick
- the site is within walking distance of the Berwick Village shopping centre
- the site is adjacent to the on-off ramp onto the Princes Highway Berwick bypass
- the site is across the road from the recently completed Casey campus of the Chisholm Institute of TAFE college

The Liberal Party believes that the augmented Electoral Commission should adopt a more practical solution which would be to use the Princes Freeway as the boundary between La Trobe and Holt, rather than the railway line and Clyde Road. Additionally, as there are no enrolled electors within the affected part of the CCD, there would be no change in population to either Division.

Indi/McEwen:

- Transfer CCDs 2050701, 2050702, 2050703, 2050704, 2050705, 2050706, 2050707, 2050708, 2050709, 2050710, 2050801, 2050802, 2050803, 2050804, 2050805, 2050806, 2050807 and 2050808 from Indi to McEwen.

Transfer CCDs 2051202, 2051203, 2051204, 2051206, 2051301, 2051302, 2051303, 2051304, 2051305, 2051306, 2051307, 2051308 and 2051309 from McEwen to Indi.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
McEwen	88719	0.71%	96529	2.82%
Indi	87843	-0.28%	90926	-3.15%

- Argument:

The draft boundaries for McEwen suggested by the Redistribution Committee to transfer the southern portion of the Delatite Shire which includes Mansfield and the surrounding district with Benalla in Indi, is in direct contrast to the local residents wishes as well as recently legislated changes made to the Delatite Shire by the Labor State Government.

The augmented Electoral Commission should be made aware that over the last three years, public meetings have been held with local residents who have fought a long battle with the Labor State Government to separate themselves from Benalla and the other areas of the Delatite Shire within the Federal Division of Indi. These local residents have made their position clear that they see no affinity of community of interest with Benalla and do not want to be part of a shire that includes Benalla.

On Monday, July 22 2002, Premier Bracks issued a media release stating in part that:

The Bracks Government will accept the views of an independent panel and create two new shires based on the existing Delatite Shire, the Premier, Steve Bracks, announced today.

Mr Bracks said the creation of two new shires, one based in Mansfield and one in Benalla, had the overwhelming support of the local community.

"The community has pursued this change despite the financial cost of establishing the new municipalities," Mr Bracks said.

"We made it clear from the beginning that for Delatite Shire Council to become two separate municipalities it must have broad community support, it must be affordable, and that there must be a sustainable future for each of the municipalities.

"The Panel has closely examined the sociological, demographic, geographic and economic issues and the Government has accepted its findings that the split is warranted."

Delatite Shire has only just recently won the right to separate into two separate shires from the Labor State Government which will create a new local government area called Mansfield and will come into effect as of January 1st, 2003. Any decision to move Mansfield and the surrounding high country region into a Federal Division with Benalla would not be welcomed or accepted by these local communities as their entire argument for the splitting of the Delatite Shire was that the Mansfield area has a much stronger community of interest argument with the communities located within McEwen.

With the strengthening of the community of interest and the necessary inclusion of the Mansfield communities in the east of McEwen, the Liberal Party suggests including the regional centre of Seymour and its surrounds into Indi, to allow both Indi and McEwen to remain within the legislative population tolerances. This will then mean that Seymour, Euroa, Violet Town, Benalla, Glenrowan, Wangaratta, Chiltern and Wodonga will reside within the one Federal Division (Indi).

These proposed changes to the north of McEwen by the Liberal Party, will consolidate these townships and rural centres along the Hume Highway (the 'backbone of Indi and the major route to Sydney), into one Federal Division.

Jagajaga/McEwen/Scullin:

- Transfer CCDs 2160409, 2161208, 2161902, 2161905 and 2161906 from Jagajaga to McEwen.

Transfer part of CCDs 2160301 and 2161401 from McEwen to Scullin.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
Jagajaga	93969	6.67%	97127	3.46%
McEwen	90678	2.93%	96681	2.98%
Scullin	84327	-4.28%	96895	3.21%

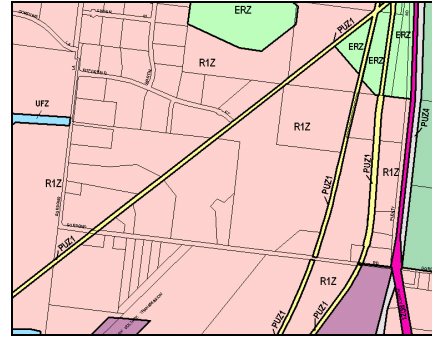
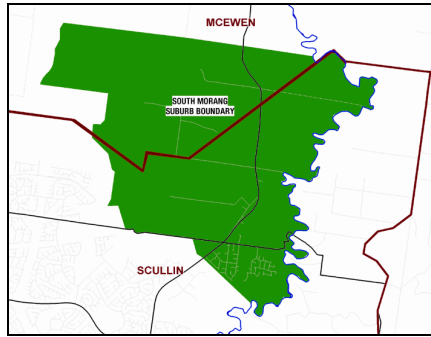
- Argument:

The Liberal Party commends the draft boundaries in part for the proposed Division of McEwen by the Redistribution Committee for the reason that it gives the Division a predominantly regional and rural character. Having stated that, some sections of the proposed boundaries between Jagajaga and McEwen appear to decrease rather than enhance community of interest by neglecting to utilise major roadways and instead using transmission lines and minor streets.

Added to this concern, is the retention of the boundary between McEwen and Scullin along the transmission line. The region bounded by Merri Creek, Craigieburn Rd, Broadford Epping Rd, Bridge Inn Rd, Plenty River and the transmission line (existing boundary), does not in any way have an affinity or community of interest with the regional centres and rural townships of Warburton, Marysville, Yea, Alexandra, Broadford, Gisborne, Kilmore, Wallan, Whittlesea or Healesville.

This area has had major metropolitan fringe development over the last couple of years with the establishment of outer metropolitan residential areas such as South Morang and Mill Park Lakes Estate, as well as the ongoing development of Hillcroft Estate and Waterstone Hill Estate. Health services, educational institutions, community facilities, sporting and recreational clubs and the major shopping complexes of Epping Plaza and The Valley Shopping Centre, are all located to the south in Scullin. There is therefore, a greater affinity for the residents of this region with the draft Division of Scullin and not McEwen.

Additionally, all these residential areas are located in the locality of South Morang which is proposed to be separated into two Federal Divisions namely McEwen and Scullin. The 'linear' transmission line proposed as the draft boundary between these Divisions (as shown in the diagram below), has now become an outdated and obsolete electoral boundary and in turn divides an ever growing homogenous community. The land directly below the transmission line has been zoned as residential land and available for housing development by the City of Whittlesea. With the outer metropolitan housing boom to continue, it will only be a matter of time until this 'boundary' will also split future development.



A more practical solution and one which will cement the community of interest through the areas of South Morang, Epping and Mill Park, would be to extend the northern boundary of Scullin to Craigieburn Road East and Bridge Inn Road. This will allow the entire locality of South Morang to reside in the one Division. The loss of population to McEwen can then be accommodated by some minor changes to the illogical minor streets boundary between Jagajaga and McEwen.

The Redistribution Committee themselves, have stated in their report that:

“...the Committee adopted the view that it is highly desirable that electoral boundaries be readily recognisable. Accordingly, the Committee was guided by Local Government boundaries, locality boundaries, main roads, railways, waterways and other lineal features as boundaries, wherever possible.” - 2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions, Report of the Redistribution Committee for Victoria, Section 17, Page 4.

It is difficult to see how Kim Street (Diamond Creek) and Leane Drive (Eltham North) could ever be considered as potential boundaries between two Federal Divisions. These two very minor and residential streets are in no way clear dividers of communities of interest and in fact, clearly divide two homogenous communities as per the attached photos.

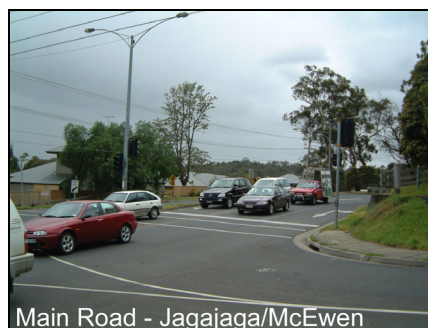


Kim Street - Jagajaga/McEwen



Leane Drive - Jagajaga/McEwen

Considering the Redistribution Committee’s comments regarding what should constitute a Federal boundary in their Redistribution report, a much more logical and commonsense approach would be to utilise the ‘major’ main roads of Wattletree, Main and Research-Warrandyte Roads (as shown below).



If the Liberal Party suggestions for the Divisions of Jagajaga, McEwen and Scullin were adopted by the augmented Electoral Commission, it will provide less voter confusion, more definable boundaries, stronger communities of interest and also allow the final boundaries to be entirely consistent with the parameters and principles established by the Redistribution Committee in their report on the 2002 Proposed Redistribution of Victoria into Electoral Divisions.

McEwen (both changes):

- Transfer CCDs 2050701, 2050702, 2050703, 2050704, 2050705, 2050706, 2050707, 2050708, 2050709, 2050710, 2050801, 2050802, 2050803, 2050804, 2050805, 2050806, 2050807 and 2050808 from Indi to McEwen and transfer CCDs 2051202, 2051203, 2051204, 2051206, 2051301, 2051302, 2051303, 2051304, 2051305, 2051306, 2051307, 2051308 and 2051309 from McEwen to Indi.

Transfer CCDs 2160409, 2161208, 2161902, 2161905 and 2161906 from Jagajaga to McEwen and transfer part of CCDs 2160301 and 2161401 from McEwen to Scullin.

This would result in new populations of:

ELECTORATE	2002 POPULATION	VARIANCE	2006 POPULATION	VARIANCE
McEwen	90267	2.47%	96572	2.87%