



The Federal Redistribution 2003
QUEENSLAND



Public Objection Number 31

Claire Thompson-Barnes

6 pages

Submission To The Australian Electoral Commission Regarding The New Boundaries Of Rankin.

I write to the commission to oppose the proposed boundaries of the Federal Seat of Rankin in the current redistribution process. I note S66 (3) (b) of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 requires the commission to take account of the following precepts in the drafting of proposed boundaries of federal divisions:

- (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;
 - (iv) the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division; and
 - (v) the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State or Territory;

As a real estate agent working in the suburbs of Shailer Park, Daisy Hill, Springwood, Carbrook, and Cornubia for over 10 years now I have had a great deal of interaction with the residents and people of East Logan. I can advise the commission that it is my opinion that the inclusion of the suburbs of East Logan in Rankin is contrary to each clause of S66 (3) (b). The reasons for this are stated below:

Physical Barriers inhibiting shared communities of interest

The M1, or the Pacific Highway, is a major physical feature of the region. It creates a major physical barrier between Eastern and Central Logan. The M1 has very few crossing points between Eastern and Central Logan, five in total from memory, with none of them providing practical pedestrian access. This forms as comparable a geographical barrier as the Brisbane River. Just as the commission has acknowledged the substantial barrier the river creates between the divisions of Moreton, Ryan, Griffith and Brisbane, so to does the M1 create a substantial physical barrier between Eastern and Central Logan.

Lack of Shared Economic and Social communities of Interest

Shared Economic and social communities of interest are negligible. Eastern Logan is a predominantly self contained residential, suburban area. Two large retail precincts service East Logan, the Logan Hyperdome in south east Logan and the Springwood commercial district incorporating Arndale and the Springwood Mall in the North. Residents of East Logan do not, as a rule, cross the freeway to procure goods and services whilst the local commercial interests easily satisfy their needs. Similarly, Woodridge CentrePoint services Central Logan whilst Western Logan is serviced by the Browns Plains Plaza. There is therefore little or no economic community of interest between the two areas.

In support of the previous statement it is worthwhile to examine relative increases in property values between the two areas. A consistency between percentage increases in property values in the two areas would indicate the existence of economic or social interdependence between the two areas. However, if one examines the data available it becomes clear that the two areas are far from consistent in their valuations and do not, on this one measure, exhibit an economic community of interest. I realize that this is only one measure, however I feel that it is fairly indicative of the lack of economic interaction and similarities shared between the two areas.

Existing State Boundaries are Contrary to the Proposed Seat.

It should furthermore be noted that in its 1999 state redistribution the Queensland Electoral Commission acknowledged the substantial physical barrier, and the resultant lack of shared communities, created by the M1. S66 (3) (b) (v) requires the commission to consider the existing state divisional boundaries. At one stage during its state redistribution deliberations, it was proposed that the commission consider crossing the M1 in its redistribution of the State Division of Springwood. When it was made clear that the M1 inhibits any reasonable level of shared community interest the State Commission finalized the boundaries of the seat without crossing the M1.

Examples of Community Feedback

In 2000, Logan City Council conducted a postal plebiscite of all residents of Slacks Creek living on the eastern side of the M1¹. The plebiscite asked residents if they wished to change the name of their small part of Slacks Creek to Daisy Hill. Greater than 50% of all residents responded to the survey with 98% of respondents indicating that they felt their area should be part of Daisy Hill in lieu of Slacks Creek, acknowledged as a Western Logan Suburb. This survey indicates the level of shared community of interest between the two regions, or lack thereof.

Key Transport Routes not Adequately Represented in New Seat.

The proposed seat of Rankin contains a number of key transport routes, none of which, I believe, are appropriately reflected in the new seat, they are:

- The M1, running North/South which is predominately used by residents to travel to and from their places of employment in the Brisbane CBD, the commercial precinct at Mt Gravatt, or onto the Gateway Motorway corridor;
- The Logan Motorway, running East/West that links the City of Ipswich (not in Rankin) with Central and Western Logan and Beenteigh (not in Rankin), and
- The Mount Lindsay Highway, running North/South that links Western Logan with the commercial precinct of Salisbury, Rocklea, Moorooka (not in Rankin) and eventually the CBD via the inner suburbs.

¹ At this time, Slacks creek was the only only suburb in Logan to cross the M1 (as it was one of the foundation suburbs of the Logan valley).

In relation to public transport, the only train line runs through Logan Central. However, given that the train stations at Loganlea, Woodridge and Kingston are acknowledged as suffering from some of the highest rates of car theft in South East Queensland; residents of Eastern Logan as a rule avoid utilising the existing park and ride facilities. Most East Logan public transport users opt to utilise the privately operated bus service (Clarks).

In another indication of the complete lack of any shared community of interest I draw the committees attention to the Clarks bus service. The service is run under a state granted monopoly license for the City of Logan, however it receives negligible state grants, it is thus run almost entirely as a private sector interest. It is interesting, if not enlightening, to note that while Clarks runs ten bus routes, not one of them provides a cross city service linking Eastern, Central and Western Logan. The sheer lack of an economical bus route across the city provides further evidence of a complete lack of an economic or social community of interest shared between the two areas.

Summary of Concerns

As stated in the initial paragraph of this submission, the commission is required to consider four precepts in the design of boundaries, I believe that in every case the proposed boundaries for Rankin do not comply with these precepts vis a vis the Eastern Logan Suburbs. In particular:

- ***Community of Interest.*** Few if any communities of interest are shared between Eastern Logan and the remainder. The two areas operate separate contained suburban economies and communities and share little socio-economic similarities, as evidenced by the disparity in housing price increases. This lack of sharing of a community interest is further evidenced by the overwhelming democratic decision of the Eastern Slacks Creek residents to rename their part of their suburb Daisy Hill, this indicates some depth of feeling within the community vis a vis Eastern and Western Logan.
- ***Means of Communication and Travel.*** All areas of the greater Brisbane area share the same radio, print media and television. This is not a consideration. However in relation to Travel the proposed seat of Rankin does not adequately consider that the major transportation routes are not appropriately reflected in the new seat. The M1, whilst shared by both Central and Eastern Logan creates an insurmountable barrier, whereas the natural corridors of transport and growth in Logan (Mount Lindsay Highway and Logan Motorway) are not adequately contained within the proposed boundaries. There is a substantial argument for making Rankin a more north/south oriented seat using the Mount Lindsay highway as a focal point.
- ***Any physical features.*** The predominant physical feature of Eastern Logan is the M1. It is not only an insurmountable physical barrier with only 5 over/under passes not reasonably accessible by pedestrian traffic, it also reflects the deeper divide between the communities of eastern and western Logan as reflected above. The freeway may as well be a canyon, or a twenty foot fence; it reflects an insurmountable physical feature that is not reflected in the draft of the new seats.

- **Existing State Divisions.** The seats of Springwood and Logan, which cover largely the area under discussion, are specifically designed with the M1 in mind. They reflect the individual communities of interest on either side of the M1 and this acted as the predominant consideration in the drafting of the state seats. The design of these state seats, which are the result of many of the issues raised above, do not appear to have been adequately considered by the commission.

Proposed Solution.

Whilst I do not have the relevant Australian Bureau of Statistics data available, it seems to me to be total folly to allow the seat of Rankin to cross the M1. I would therefore propose the following changes to the redistribution. The Eastern Logan area contains roughly 23,000 electors.

Rankin

To recover 23,000 voters from that part of Sunnybank Hills, Stretton area etc required to make up for the loss of the Eastern Logan suburbs. This new seat more adequately reflects the importance of the Mount Lindsay Highway as the major transport and development corridor within the region. There is already an evidenced level of shared communities of interest with this area with shared bus routes, train lines and State Seats.

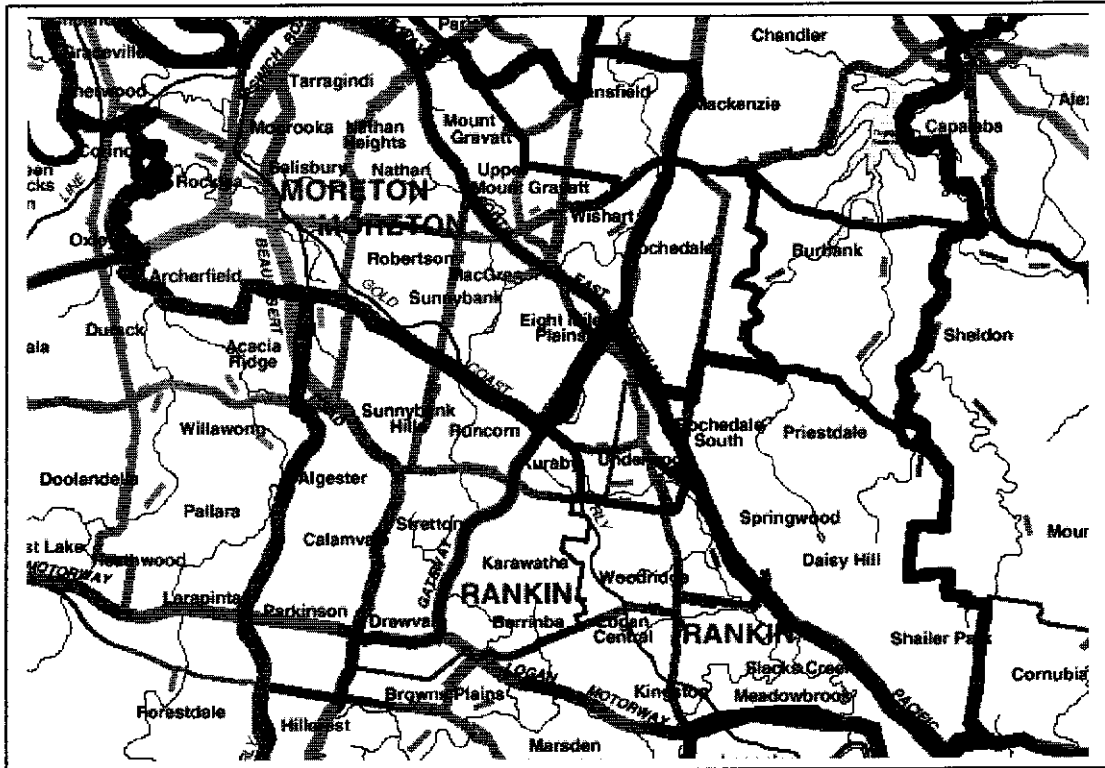
Moreton

To recover 23,000 from that part of Mount Gravatt, Upper Mount Gravatt, Wishart etc required to make up for the loss of Sunnybank Hills, Stretton etc. Although this submission has highlighted the problem of the M1 acting as a barrier to communities of interest within Logan city, Kessells road at Mt Gravatt acts as a major corridor for shared transport across the M1. Garden City further acts as a focal point for the suburbs saddling the M1 at Mt Gravatt and McGregor. Returning those parts of Mount Gravatt, Upper Mount Gravatt and Wishart to Moreton would ensure that Moreton remains an east/west aspected seat covering the developed suburban belt of the Southern Brisbane area.

Bonner

To take in the 23,000 voters of Eastern Logan suburbs excised from Rankin to make up for the loss of Mount Gravatt, Upper Mount Gravatt etc. Bonner would thus include the majority of the Gateway Motorway within its boundaries. The Motorway reflects the major growth corridor for southeastern suburbs of the Brisbane area and it is appropriate that this major shared means of transportation be acknowledged within the seats design. It should also be considered that the semi-rural suburbs of Rochedale and Burbank are planned for significant urban development in the near future. These are suburbs bordering eastern Logan with which there are many shared communities of interest (shared schools, shared retail centers, shared public transport routes and shared community facilities.) It seems far more appropriate for Eastern Logan to be included in this seat than the current proposal.

Using the booth figures for total votes from the last election (which is rough, but in the absence of more accurate figures the best I can work with.) I have drafted the following map which reflects my proposed change. As you can see the change is intended to only affect these three seats and thus would not affect any other boundaries.



I would like to thank the committee for your time in considering this submission and look forward to perusing the finalised boundaries.

Yours truly,

Claire Thompson-Barnes