



The Federal Redistribution 2006  
NEW SOUTH WALES



**Public Suggestion Number: 15**

**Name: Griffith City Council**

**Page(s): 8**



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22/03/2006 08:20 AM

To nsw.redistribution@aec.gov.au

cc

bcc

Subject Submission from Griffith City Council

Classification  Unclassified

Please find attached Council's electronic copy of our submission to the NSW redistribution. The original will follow in the mail.

Regards

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Assistant General Manager Corporate  
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**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

13 March 2006

The Redistribution Committee, NSW  
Australian Electoral Commission  
Po Box 20014  
World Square NSW 2002

Dear Sir/Madam,

On behalf of Griffith City Council, I submit Council's suggestions into the redistribution of federal electoral boundaries in New South Wales.

Council welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the process and looks forward to the next stages of the project including comments on the public suggestions and the redistribution proposal.

Yours sincerely

**J. P. DAL BROI**  
**MAYOR**



**Submission into the proposed  
Redistribution of Federal Electoral  
Boundaries  
in New South Wales**

**March 2006**

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Griffith City Council is a rural based Local Government Authority constituted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993. The elected Council comprises of 12 Councillors who on an annual basis, elect the Mayor. The Council represents the interests of some 27,500 persons and includes the City of Griffith and the towns/villages of Hanwood, Yenda, Beelbangera, Bilbul, Tharbogang, Yenda, Lake Wyangan and Nericon.

Council is experiencing significant growth in commercial, industrial and residential activity with the population growing at approximately 2% per annum and projected to rise to 45,000 in the year 2030.

The Local Government area of Griffith City Council is contained within the Federal Electoral Division of the Riverina which has existed since 1901.

The current enrolment statistics reflect 88,201 persons which constitutes a surplus of 350 people over and above the revised quota of 87,931 persons. This also represents a variation of just 0.31% above the quote and Council understands that there a number of electorates throughout NSW that have a much larger deviation form the average.

Adjoining electorates include Farrer with a population of 85,712 persons (to the south of Riverina) and the federal seat of Parkes with a population of 81,972 persons (to the north/north west of Riverina).

The Federal Member for Riverina, Kay Hull MP, currently resides in Wagga Wagga and has offices in both Wagga Wagga and Griffith. The seat was previously held by Mr Noel Hicks for the period 1980-1998.

Council strongly supports a retention of the Federal Electoral district of Riverina within its current boundaries, as the geographic area is of a size that is manageable in terms of the time availability of the sitting member and the fact that the distances are not so great so as to prevent their involvement in important initiatives that occur in the many communities that comprise the seat.

With the growth being experienced, particularly within the Western Riverina geographic area of the seat, it is felt that the electoral division of the Riverina will continue to grow so as to remain above any determined quota for Federal seats within New South Wales. The attached population projections reflect and support this contention.

The consistent growth and investment in industry in particular, is due to the overwhelming success of the Snowy Mountain Hydro Electricity Scheme which by virtue of the diversion of significant quantities of water has facilitated the considerable investment of private sector funds into agricultural and manufacturing processes which will continue to see the region prosper. Importantly even in the past 5 to 6 years of drought with reduced water availability the region has experienced consistent growth.

This growth in part is attributed to the emergence of the region as a major wine grape growing area in New South Wales with predictions that it will become the dominant wine grape growing area in Australia within the next 5 to 10 years.

Further a key ingredient of government are the people and as such the diversity in the people of the Western Riverina creates its own unique issues in relation to immigration, employment and culture. Servicing a dynamic electorate like Riverina is akin to some of the metropolitan electorates in many ways, however when you take into account the distance issue, the metropolitan locations particularly in relation to public transport infrastructure become a

major impediment to effective government. The retention of Riverina and all rural seats would overcome this potential problem.

## **The Federal Seat of Riverina**

Council would have a preference for the redistribution process to look closely at metropolitan Federal seats as opposed to rural and regional seats as the issues of geography and travelling times become very important in terms of the ability of the member to represent the concerns of their constituents.

The time has arrived whereby continuing to expand the geographic for rural seats is beyond the ability of any reasonable person to travel and represent the interests of their constituents in a meaningful way. Conversely, seats within metropolitan areas are often geographically small and thus these problems are not encountered.

To reduce the number of rural electoral divisions will simply mean flow on effects to other electoral districts in proximity to the district to be abolished and reduce public confidence in electoral system that is already somewhat removed from being able to represent the interests of rural and regional residents.

In addition the Riverina is an electorate that works exceptionally well together. The links between all levels of industry are particularly beneficial and cooperative in nature. There are also very well developed linkages between local government Councils in the region that have provided tangible outcomes.

Further issues include in-kind and economic factors per capita. For example, in regional NSW like the Riverina there is a harmony in relation to like-mindedness in issues and whilst this may not be seen as detractor from redistribution in itself any potential redistribution could erode the spirit of the communities by alienating people from their natural linkages and pit constituents against one another. Whilst this may well be unintentional it strikes at the heart of the community that is already disadvantaged by the tyranny of distance from government.

Per capita costs per constituent to have access to government have escalated over the past ten years and would only increase if the lobbying ability of affected areas like the Riverina are diminished. In vital areas of communication and education, the community are already at a distinct disadvantage and this too would increase with a redistribution. Access to mobile phone coverage, internet, health (particularly in areas of paediatrics, orthopaedics and mental health) services are in decline and these would only exacerbated by a redistribution. Not to mention the impact of isolation and natural environment forces on the communities in this area means that this could all be compounded by a redistribution. The spiralling and detrimental impact on regional services like health, education, police, emergency services etc could well be disastrous with a redistribution as natural linkages are supplanted, and in some case disappear, by a new level of bureaucracy that takes an inordinate amount of time to become efficient and deliver services.

Council would also comment that the retention of the name of Riverina as the name for the electoral division remain, as the community have a close affiliation with the term having been in existence since 1901.

Council trust that these comments will be taken into account by the Redistribution Committee and looks forward to the next phase of the overall redistribution process.



Andrew.Crakanthorp@griffith.nsw.gov.au  
22/03/2006 11:41 AM

To nsw.redistribution@aec.gov.au

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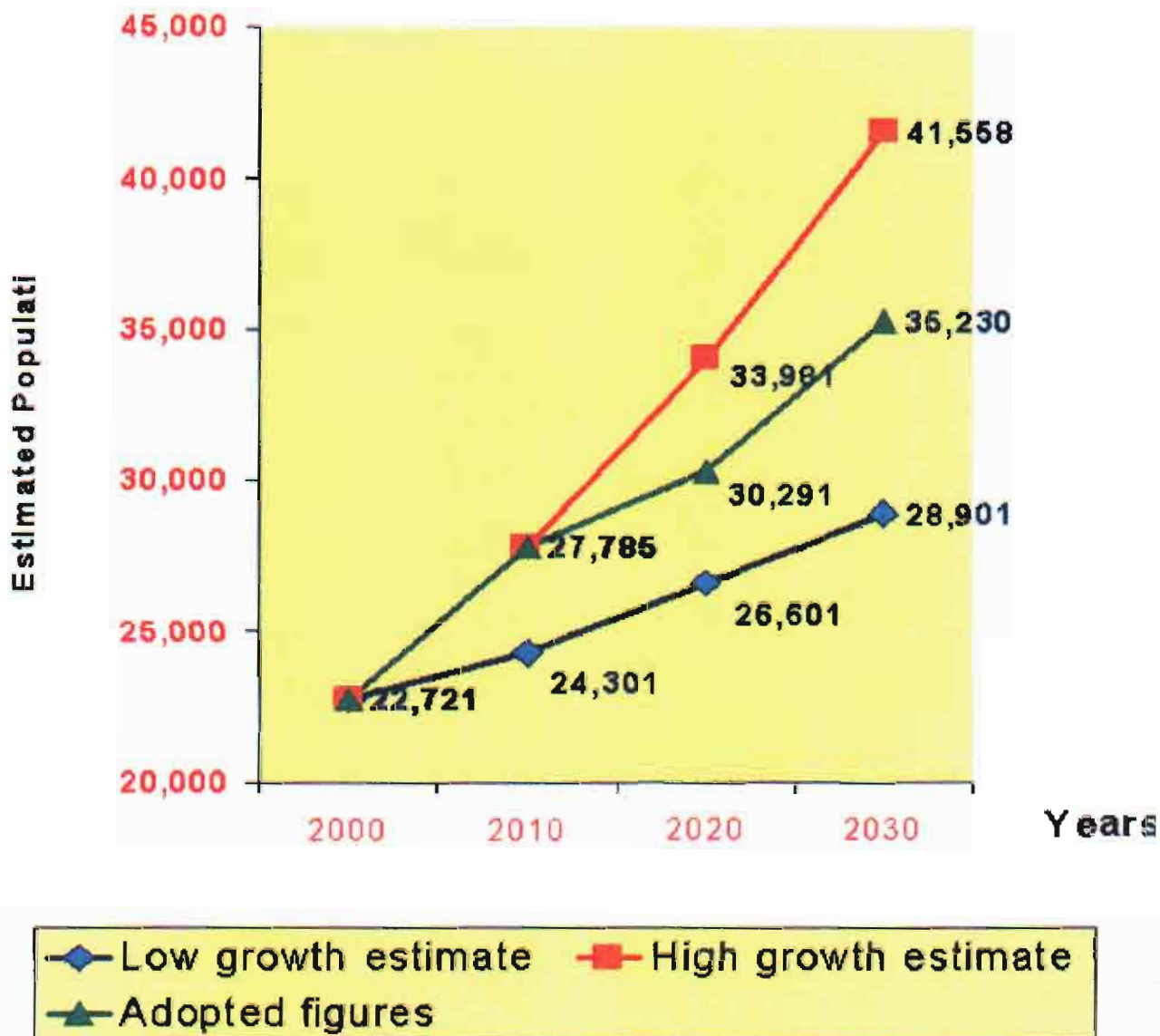
Subject Griffith City Council submission -attachment

Classification  Unclassified

Hello Rocky,

As discussed, please find attached the population projections for Griffith which form part of the Griffith City Council submission

Regards



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