



# Objection 469

Clark McKenzie

5 pages

I would like to congratulate the Redistribution Committee for Victoria (Redistribution Committee) on its proposed draft boundaries for the Federal Redistribution of Victoria, as it relates to my local community.

As a long-term resident of Donvale in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, I have had a long interest in both Federal and State politics, including the electoral boundaries for Victoria.

Congratulations must go to the Redistribution Committee because the proposed draft boundaries offer some of the most cohesive federal electoral boundaries in the east of Melbourne, in recent memory.

In particular, the realignment of the electorates of Menzies and Deakin has finally acknowledged that our communities centre around activity centres (like Box Hill, Doncaster, Mitcham and Ringwood). Our communities do not simply connect through transport corridors along train lines or freeways.

I have long been a critic of the old boundaries of the Division of Menzies, which for many years (strangely) extended from Bulleen in the west to Wonga Park in the east. Two remarkably different and disconnected areas for an urban electorate.

I therefore believe the proposed draft boundaries finally solve this misalignment by transferring Wonga Park to the Division of Casey, and by creating the Doncaster-Box Hill axis in the Division of Menzies.

As for my suburb of Donvale, I am really pleased that it has been attached to Mitcham, North Ringwood, Ringwood and Park Orchards in the Division of Deakin. The new Springvale Rd boundary between Menzies and Deakin is a very clear and strong divisional boundary. This boundary recognises that residents east of Springvale Rd strongly orient towards Mitcham and Ringwood in the Division of Deakin, while those west of Springvale Rd towards Doncaster and Box Hill in the Division of Menzies.

Having regard to subsection 66(3)(b) of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* (1918) (Electoral Act) I outline some further thoughts below.

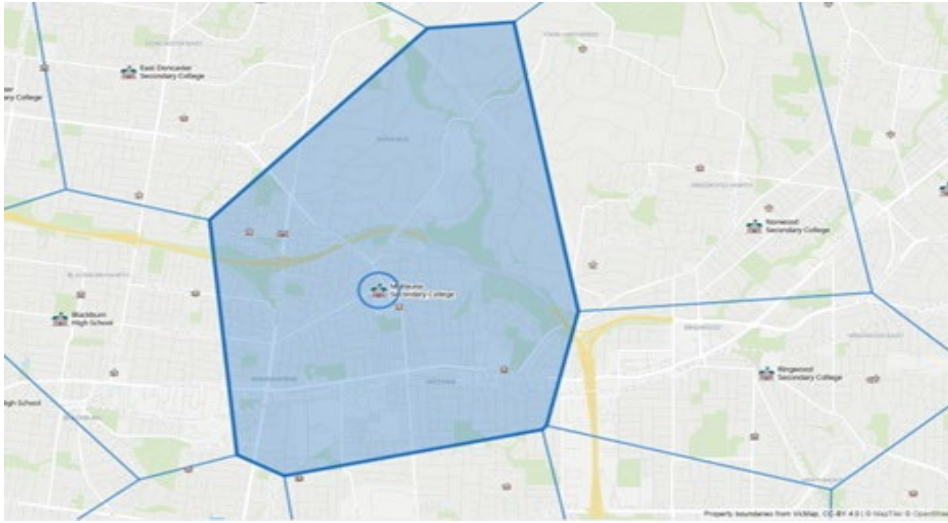
### **1. Communities of interests including economic, social and regional interests**

Subsection 66(3)(b)(i) of the Electoral Act stipulates that regard must be given to “*community of interests within the proposed Electoral Division, including economic, social and regional interests*”.

A suburb like Donvale is obviously connected to each of its neighbouring suburbs, including Mitcham, Doncaster, Park Orchards and Ringwood. However, it is clear that Donvale overwhelmingly skews towards Mitcham and Ringwood in economic and social terms.

Central Mitcham provides local shopping to Donvale residents with a supermarket, pharmacy, gym and until recently banking and a post office.

Most of Donvale falls within the Mullauna Secondary College school zone (based in Mitcham), again highlighting the close connection between Donvale and Mitcham in the Division of Deakin (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1: Mullauna College School Zone**

Local Donvale based sporting clubs also predominantly compete in associations based in and around the Division of Deakin.

For example, the Donvale Football Club competes in the Eastern Football Netball League, centred on Deakin. The Donvale Dunkers Basketball Club competes in the Melbourne East Basketball Association, with its home at Nunawading Basketball Stadium and primary other venues (The Rings in Ringwood, Norwood Secondary College, Forest Hill Secondary College, and Sportlink in Vermont South) all based in the proposed Division of Deakin. And the Donvale Cricket Club is a member of the Ringwood & District Cricket Association, again based in Deakin.

Each of these examples of community based sporting clubs clearly demonstrates my earlier point: that as a community, residents of Donvale overwhelmingly skew to Ringwood and Mitcham to our east, not Doncaster to our west.

## **2. Means of communication and travel**

Subsection 66(3)(b)(ii) of the Electoral Act stipulates that regard must be given to “*means of communication and travel within the proposed Electoral Division*”.

Donvale straddles the Eastern Fwy with primary local road connections via Springvale Rd, Mitcham Rd, Park Rd and Tindals Rd.

Springvale Rd is the primary thoroughfare for Donvale residents to and from the Eastern Fwy, and it offers an excellent boundary between the proposed Divisions of Menzies and Deakin.

Mitcham Rd is the main road connection for Donvale residents through to Whitehorse Rd in Mitcham, with Park Rd connecting both Donvale and Park Orchards into central Mitcham as well.

These primary road connections explain why Mitcham acts as the main transport hub for Donvale residents. Most train commuters from Donvale utilise Heatherdale and Mitcham railway stations (both in the Deakin electorate) for travel into the CBD. Donvale is also primarily connected via the 271 bus route from Mitcham Railway Station and 901 into Ringwood (including Eastland Shopping Centre).

Park Rd closely connects Donvale to Park Orchards and North Ringwood to its east, and is another reason why Donvale blends almost seamlessly with those areas in the Division of Deakin.

### **3. Physical features of proposed electorate**

Subsection 66(3)(b)(iv) of the Electoral Act stipulates that regard must be given to *‘the physical features and area of the proposed Electoral Division’*.

Donvale is a suburb which straddles Springvale Rd and the Eastern Fwy and in fact, is named after two roads that border the suburb, Doncaster Rd and Springvale Rd.

Clearly, Springvale Rd and the Eastern Fwy offer two significant physical boundaries.

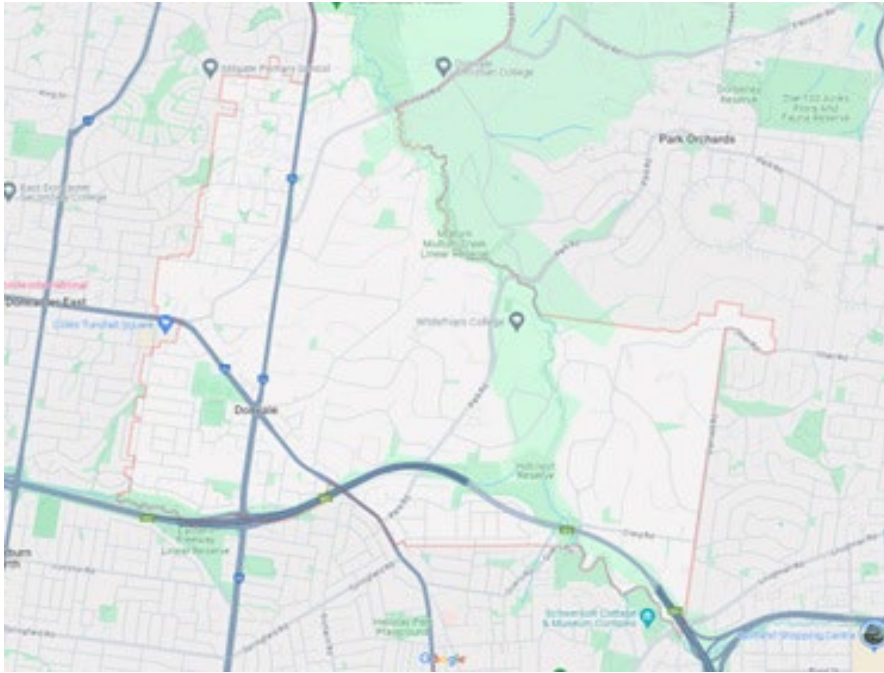
With the Mullum Mullum and Melba tunnels enabling vehicles to pass under the Mullum Mullum valley, the connectivity between Donvale and Mitcham along Mitcham Rd is excellent and does not present as a physical barrier. This facilitates the abovementioned access of Donvale residents to Mitcham and Ringwood. This clearly supports the proposed draft boundaries.

I also believe the northern boundary between the Divisions of Menzies and Deakin under the proposed draft boundaries, appropriately utilises Old Warrandyte Rd, Tindals Rd, Stintons Rd and Falconer Rd. This choice of boundary appropriately separates Donvale and Park Orchards in the Division of Deakin from the greener and less densely populated wedge zone to the north in the Division of Menzies.

### **4. Existing boundaries**

Subsection 66(3)(b)(v) of the Electoral Act stipulates that regard must be given to *“the boundaries of existing Divisions in the State”*. I assume this requirement refers to locality boundaries, local government boundaries and state electorate boundaries. I will touch on each in turn.

The boundaries of the locality of Donvale are outlined in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2: Locality of Donvale**

Under the proposed draft boundaries the majority, but not all, of the locality of Donvale will move to the Division of Deakin. The parts of Donvale west of Springvale Rd are proposed to remain in the Division of Menzies. This raises the obvious question as to whether all of Donvale should move to Deakin?

In my view, the answer to this question is no. This is because of the excellent boundary that Springvale Rd provides. It is the most robust divisional boundary in the eastern suburbs. The barrier of Springvale Rd is also the main reason residents to its west orient to Doncaster while residents to its east orient towards Mitcham and Ringwood.

Therefore, even having regard to the locality boundary of Donvale, I commend the Redistribution Committee for utilising Springvale Rd as the boundary between the Divisions of Menzies and Deakin.

The next obvious boundary to consider is the relevant local government boundary. Donvale falls within the Manningham Council area. As a rule, I believe it is preferable, where possible, to include local government areas in a single federal electorate. In most cases this is not however possible.

And in my view, it is particularly appropriate in this case due to the nature of the Manningham local government area. Manningham is made up of two quite distinct halves. One half west of Springvale Rd which includes suburbs like Bulleen, Templestowe and Doncaster. With the other half being suburbs like Donvale, Park Orchards, Warrandyte and Wonga Park.

For an urban municipality it is hard to find greater differences than between these two areas. The inner eastern suburbs of Bulleen, Templestowe and Doncaster are more densely populated and suit the Doncaster-Box Hill axis, while Donvale, Park Orchards, Warrandyte and Wonga Park are truly outer eastern suburbs that orient strongly towards Ringwood, Mitcham and Croydon.

Like the neighbouring municipality of Whitehorse, the communities of interest of these areas strongly override council boundaries which seem to have been artificially created during the council amalgamation process in the 1990's. so I again support the Redistribution Committee for the currently proposed boundaries.

Finally, it is appropriate to consider the relevant state electorate boundaries. In this case, Donvale falls within the Victorian State district of Warrandyte. The state electorate of Warrandyte includes the suburbs Park Orchards, Ringwood North, Warrandyte, Warrandyte North, Warrandyte South, Warranwood, Wonga Park, most of Donvale, and parts of Chirnside Park, Doncaster East, and Ringwood.

Warrandyte therefore straddles both the current and proposed Divisions of Menzies, Deakin and Casey and is perhaps not particularly instructive for the purposes of Subsection 66(3)(b)(v), with one exception. With respect to Donvale, the Warrandyte state electorate uses Springvale Rd as the divisional boundary in a similar fashion to the proposed draft boundaries put forward by the Redistribution Committee.

The use of Springvale Rd as a divisional boundary for the Warrandyte state electorate as well as under the proposed draft boundaries for the Divisions of Menzies and Deakin again highlights the sound proposal put forward under the current draft boundaries.

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I thank you for considering my submission and again congratulate you on the excellent boundaries that the Redistribution Committee has proposed for my local community and the eastern suburbs of Melbourne more broadly.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Clark McKenzie.

Clark McKenzie