



Comment on objections 28

Sarah Barton

1 page

Comments on Objections to the proposed Macnamara electorate boundary redistribution.

I would like to rebut the Labor Party's and other objections to the Macnamara redistribution that claims that the community will be better served by having all of Windsor, Prahran and South Yarra in the electorate of Higgins on the basis that we are also in Stonnington at the local government level. Having lived in Windsor over many decades it has always felt more part of the inner-city ring of Prahran, St Kilda, Richmond than the next ring suburbs of Malvern, Elsternwick, Hawthorn. These inner ring suburbs are made up of small homes and apartments and tend to house younger people, and people on lower incomes than the generally larger places further out. There are also many creative industry workers in these inner suburbs – many of us older having settled here when homes were cheap. Younger creative people are also attracted to cheaper apartments and the dynamic neighbourhoods of East St Kilda, Windsor, Prahran and South Yarra. Events like the St Kilda Film Festival and the Astor Theatre help to make filmmakers across the inner south feel part of the community. Around Windsor station too people technically living in East St Kilda often identify with living in Windsor despite regularly crossing the great divide that is Dandenong Road. Although it may be busy and ugly, people cross Dandenong road for a great many reasons many times a day. Living on the Windsor side of Dandenong Road I regularly walk my dog in Alma park on the other side, I ride to St Kilda Beach most weeks, consider The Astor my local cinema. My son attended St Michael's Grammar School and there are many more reasons why people move freely north and south of Dandenong Road.

There are also many reasons for services to be merged on both sides of Dandenong Road – when my children were young we attended play groups, Kindergarten and libraries along the St Kilda section of Chapel Street but also accessed many services up towards South Yarra. For me being in the same federal electorate as East St Kilda, St Kilda and Elwood seems like a natural cultural fit with my colleagues and friends who live along this inner suburban band. Many of us were attracted to the area in more bohemian times and stayed on for decades. It feels like a much better cultural fit for Windsor, Prahran and South Yarra to be in Macnamara than in Higgins which has never been known for its artists, performers, filmmakers or anything remotely bohemian.... or to use a more modern term "hipster". This belt of inner south suburbs is now host to an abundance of cafes, bars, restaurants, night clubs and a few remaining live music venues. Elsternwick, Malvern and Toorak can't really lay claim to this kind of identity.

I understand that the Jewish community has an interest in keeping their community members in the same electorate but this is a small part of the electorate and members of the Jewish community are already well spread across areas of Higgins. The view from outside the Jewish community would be that the proposed boundary change brings together these inner ring suburbs where there are many shared cultural and business styles that are still found in the inner suburbs of Melbourne.