



Objection 376

Maroondah City Council

4 pages

27 June 2024

Att: Redistribution Secretariat

RE: Victorian Federal Redistribution 2024 - Proposed changes to Deakin electoral boundary

Maroondah City Council would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide an objection to the current Victorian federal redistribution process. This submission is focused on considering the electoral boundaries that relate to parts of the City of Maroondah local government area.

As a result of the proposed 2024 changes to the Federal Electoral boundaries, the majority of the City of Maroondah local government area will remain in the Deakin division. However, it is important to note that the division has been expanded to include additional suburbs (in part) to the north (Donvale, Park Orchards, Ringwood North, and Wonga Park) and to the west (Blackburn North, Blackburn, Nunawading, and Mitcham).

Under the proposed federal redistribution, several Maroondah suburbs that were previously included in the Deakin division will now move to the Aston division. These include suburbs of

- Ringwood (part),
- Heathmont (part),
- Bayswater North (part); and
- Kilsyth South.

Council believes that the City of Maroondah should remain in the Deakin division to the greatest extent possible, taking population considerations into account. This will ensure that the electoral division maintains contiguous communities of interest, aligns with natural dividing features, and enables effective representation for local communities at the Federal level.

Following a review of these proposed boundary changes, Maroondah City Council objects to the suburbs of Ringwood (part) and Heathmont (part) moving into the Aston division and would recommend these suburbs remain within the Deakin division.

The primary reason for this objection relates to community of interest. Dividing these suburbs along Canterbury Road would separate Ringwood and Heathmont into two separate electoral divisions. The entirety of these suburbs is significantly aligned to the Ringwood Metropolitan Activity Centre and Croydon Major Activity Centre, north of the Dandenong Creek, where major retail centres, transport hubs, leisure facilities and medical facilities are situated.

In addition, the area of Ringwood and Heathmont proposed to be shifted out of Deakin into Aston include community and civic facilities that are heavily utilised by communities in the City of Maroondah. These facilities include Heathmont Secondary College, Ringwood Golf, The Rings, Maroondah Nets, HE Parker Reserve, Heathmont Reserve, Heathmont Golf Park and the southern half of the Heathmont Village commercial area. The exclusion of these facilities from the Deakin electorate has the potential to disadvantage the community through dislocation from centres of attraction.

Contact us

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The residents of the City of Maroondah deserve appropriate Federal representation. The best way to achieve this is by ensuring that the communities of interest within Maroondah are included in an electorate that shares the same challenges and aspirations. It is important to recognise the existing relationships between communities in the City of Maroondah and not to split suburbs wherever possible. By ensuring there is no division between the suburbs of Ringwood and Heathmont, it would be possible to have a seamless representation by a single Federal representative who can effectively advocate for all constituents within the Maroondah community. Additionally, the proposed Federal boundary redistribution deviates from aligning the Deakin division with natural and physical features. The Dandenong Creek, currently serving as a physical boundary strongly influencing community and social connections, would no longer mark the southern boundary of the Deakin division. The Dandenong Creek is a significantly more important physical boundary than Canterbury Road in identifying continuous communities of interest - particularly within Ringwood and Heathmont suburbs.

The sections of Ringwood and Heathmont that are identified to be moved from Deakin into Aston reflect a projected elector population of 4,242 persons¹. This area is a greyfield suburban area with limited potential for population growth. Adding this number of electors back into the Deakin division would result in a projected enrolment of 134,556 in April 2028. Removal of this number of electors from the proposed Aston division would result in a projected enrolment of 119,809 in April 2028.

To boost elector numbers in Aston to align with the projected enrolment quota more closely, it is suggested that consideration be given to the inclusion of the suburb of Mulgrave (part) within the adjacent division of Bruce (3449 projected electors in April 2028) (area bounded by Wellington Rd, Jacksons Rd, Police Rd and Eastlink) be included within the Aston division. This would result in a projected enrolment for the Aston division of 123,258 in April 2028, or a variation from the projected enrolment quota of -0.6%. The impact of this elector movement on the Bruce division would see a reduction in electors to 128,205 or a variation from the projected enrolment quota of -2.62%.

To reduce elector numbers in Deakin to align with the projected enrolment quota more closely, it is suggested that consideration be given to the inclusion of the suburbs of Blackburn and Blackburn North (part suburb/s north of Whitehorse Road and within the proposed Deakin division) (3,130 projected electors in April 2028), to be included within the Menzies division. The impact of this elector movement on the Deakin division, if the Ringwood and Heathmont sections were included in the Deakin division as proposed above, would see a reduction in electors to 131,426 or a variation from the projected enrolment quota of +0.85%. The impact of this elector movement on the Menzies division would see an increase in electors to 131,990 or a variation from the projected enrolment quota of +2.43%.

Specifically, Maroondah City Council proposes that:

- The full extent of suburbs of Ringwood and Heathmont should remain in the Deakin division, extending from Canterbury Road in the north to the Dandenong Creek in the south, east to Bayswater Road, and west to Eastlink. This submission proposes the area shown in 'green' in the map below be reincluded in the Deakin division, rather the Aston division.
- Consideration is given to the inclusion of the suburb of Mulgrave (part) within the Aston Division, instead of the Bruce division to more closely approximate projected enrolment quotas.
- Consideration is given to the inclusion of the suburb of Blackburn / Blackburn North (north of Whitehorse Road within the proposed Deakin division) to be included within the Menzies division. This would enable the Deakin division to align with the projected enrolment quota more closely, whilst still accommodating the full suburbs of Ringwood and Heathmont.
- There is no objection to the inclusion of suburbs of Nunawading and Mitcham within the Deakin division.

¹ Based on 2021 ABS Census of Population and Housing data for people aged over 18 years in the 17 identified Statistical Area Level 1 area codes to be moved from Deakin to Aston under the proposed redistribution - 21103126626, 21103126612, 21103126731, 21103126732, 21103126723, 21103126722, 21103126718, 21103126715, 21103126716, 21103126717, 21103126747, 21103126712, 21103126714, 21103126713, 21103126703, 21103126309 and 21103126303

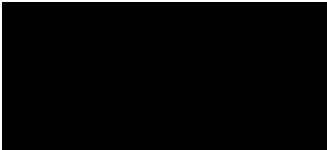
- There is also no objection to the semi-rural areas of Park Orchards (part), Donvale (part) and Ringwood North being included within the Deakin division due to community of interest alignment with lower density communities in the north of the Maroondah municipality.

Two maps are attached as appendices to clearly present Maroondah City Council's proposed alignment of electoral boundaries.

Maroondah City Council appreciates the opportunity to provide an objection to this important process and look forward to receiving the draft report for further comment.

Should you require further information or wish to discuss Maroondah City Council's submission, please do not hesitate to contact, Chief Financial Officer, [REDACTED].

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Chief Executive Officer.

[REDACTED]
Chief Executive Officer

Appendix - Proposed amendments to Victorian Federal Redistribution boundaries

