



Objection 416

Phillip Drake

24 pages

Objections to the Proposed Victorian Redistribution 2024

Thank you for allowing me to lodge my objection to the proposed redistribution in Victoria. I'd first like to say that the general ideas proposed by the AEC, are solid. Abolishing Higgins make sense, as does using Melbourne as the seat that crosses the Yarra, Deakin/Menzies becoming north/south seats are all ideas I support. The general structure of the seats is solid in the proposal, however there are a few questionable decisions that the proposal suggests that leave a lot to be desired.

Whilst the AEC doesn't necessarily always have to follow local government boundaries, sometimes they have less than ideal boundaries, in outer Melbourne and regional areas they have pretty solid boundaries and represent a coherent community of interest. This makes the decision to unnecessarily split Hepburn shire, split Wyndham council from being entirely in two seats to four, and split Nillumbik shire between Casey and McEwen not ideal. These were solid boundaries and have been replaced by using SA1 boundaries or dividing towns by the use of roads as boundaries. A lot of these changes are unnecessary and there are better alternatives.

It's disappointing for the AEC in certain occasions to favour smaller changes in the movement of voters between seats over trying to create sensible boundaries. There has been some speculation from members of the public that the changes were smaller because Victoria will gain a seat at the next seat entitlement determination. On current population projections this is not true, Victoria is well short of the possibility of gaining back its 39th seat after the next election. This means the redistribution should absolutely try and make the boundaries right this time, as these boundaries will likely be Victoria's boundaries for the next seven years.

	Dec, 2023	Dec, 2024	Dec, 2025	Dec, 2026
Victoria	37.78	37.9	38.02	38.14

Seats that Victoria is entitled to on quarterly population figures provided by the ABS and using the formula provided by the AEC. Assuming the current growth of 0.12 a year, it'll take Victoria until July in 2029 for Victoria to regain its 39th seat.

In my objections I'll be submitting an alternate proposal of the redistribution that is largely based on similar ideas to the AEC (Higgins abolished, Melbourne crossing the Yarra, Deakin/Menzies being north/south seats). The goal of my proposal is to fix up some of the issues with the proposed boundaries including:

- Bellbrae/Freshwater Creek being split
- Geelong/Melbourne border being crossed
- Melbourne extending all the way south into Prahran
- Campbellfield being split
- Hepburn shire being split
- Casey going into Nillumbik shire
- Dandenong, Prahran, Malvern East, Mulgrave being split

My proposal sees a slightly higher movement of electors, but with more local governments united and more suburbs united in a single seat.

	AEC Proposal	My Proposal
Electors transferred	369,249 (8.31% of electors)	370,833 (8.35% of electors)

Projected Population Figures

The initial projected figures provided by the ABS turned out not to be accurate. The projected numbers had an almost universal growth rate of 9.75% for the SA1's. This was wrong to anyone who spent time looking at the numbers. Victoria is a very fast-growing state but the growth is very uneven, with most of it being located in the north/western suburbs and around the Casey/Cardinia LGAs in the east.

It's quite puzzling how it took the AEC so long to notice these numbers were off. I'm curious what the situation was, did the AEC just not notice the numbers were off, did they think no one would notice, was there an issue with thinking electorates wouldn't be able to be drawn in the growth areas because of the insanely high growth? I would hope safeguards would be put in place to prevent this from happening again.

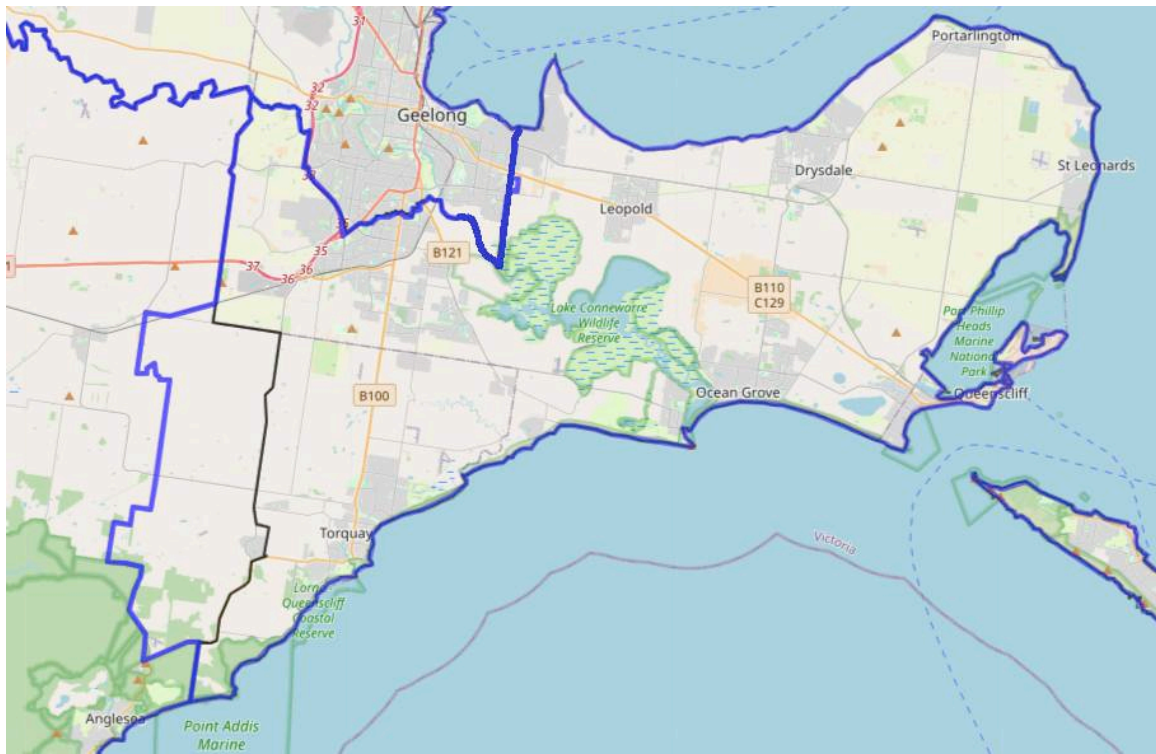
It's unfortunate because this led to members of the public submitting proposals under the old projected numbers, proposals that they would not have done under the current projected figures. The McEwen I proposed would have had a projected population of 121.27% of a quota, which was over 1/4 of a quota higher than my smallest seat in Dunkley.

All this to say that members of the public have not been able to have their say on the correct numbers. I along with other people who submitted a proposal would have submitted very different proposals with the correct figures. Because of this I hope the AEC is more open to looking at the public's suggestions in the objection phase as they have not been able to have their say so far.

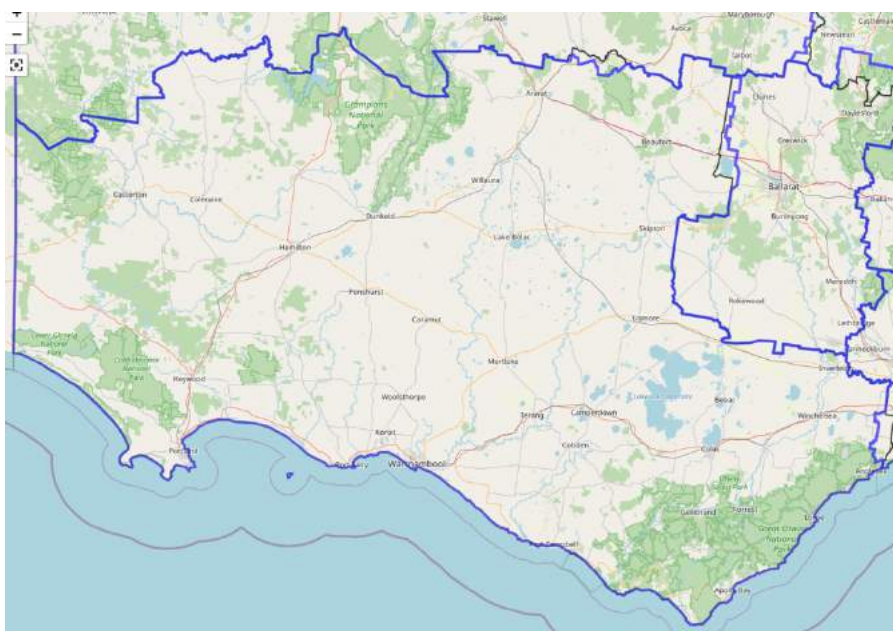
My Objections and Proposal

Corangamite/Wannon/Corio

I propose a very small change here and that is for the localities of Bellbrae and Freshwater Creek to be united in Corangamite. The numbers allow for these communities to all be in Corangamite and I think that fits better. They are Geelong based communities and are connected with Torquay. People from this area identify with which town they live in not which side of Anglesea Rd they live on.

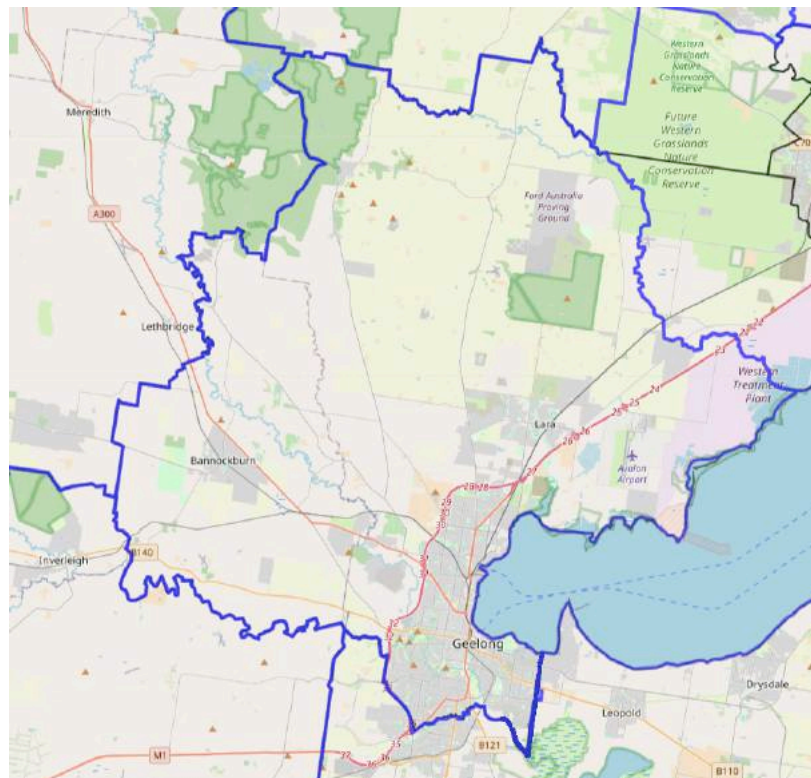


*My proposed **Corangamite** in blue, the AEC proposal in black*



Wannon

For Corio I suggest keeping the LGA boundaries for Lalor and Corio. This is an extremely solid boundary between the two seats, Corio is a Geelong based seat and Lalor is a Werribee based seat. A big issue with the proposed boundary is it pushes Corio right into the growth corridor of Wyndham council. Corio would gain parts of Werribee and Mambourin and whilst not many people live there now, given the large growth occurring in this area it is highly likely there will be a lot of development in this area over the next seven years. Any growth in this area would leave a Werribee community stuck in a Geelong based seat. The Geelong/Wyndham council boundaries have been a solid boundary for the last thirty years and I think they should continue to be used.

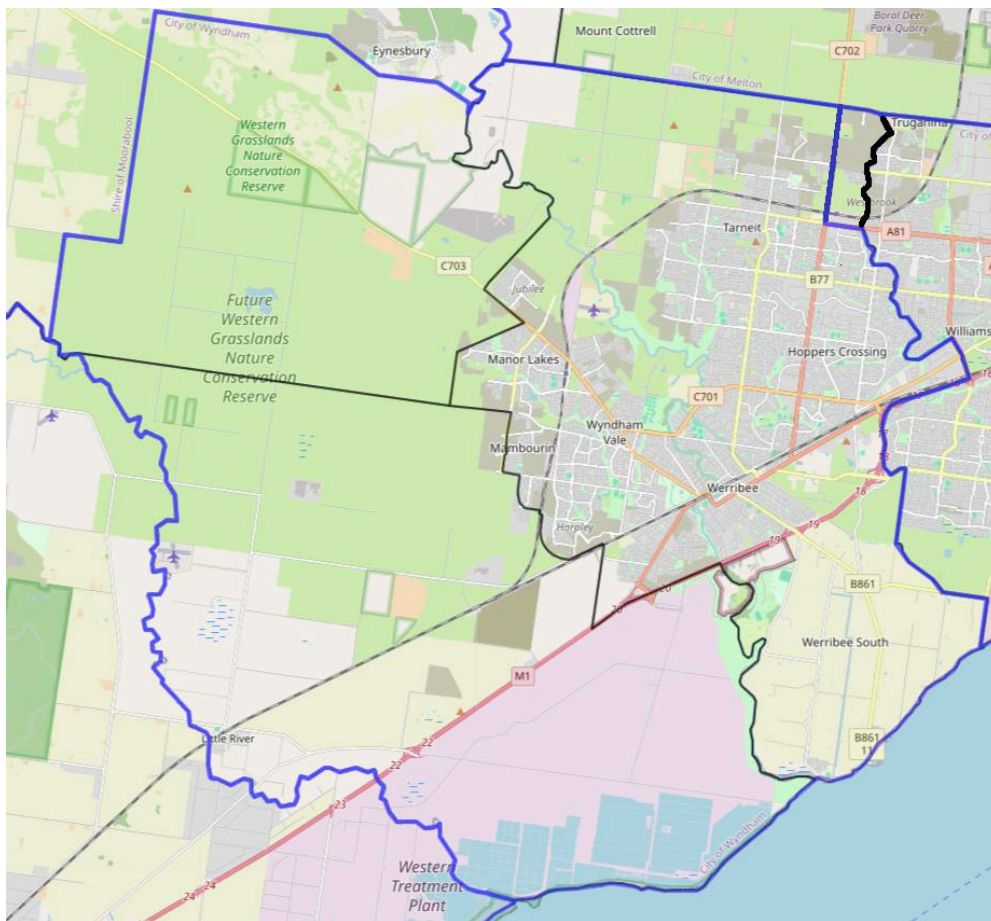


Corio

Lalor/Gellibrand/Fraser/Hawke

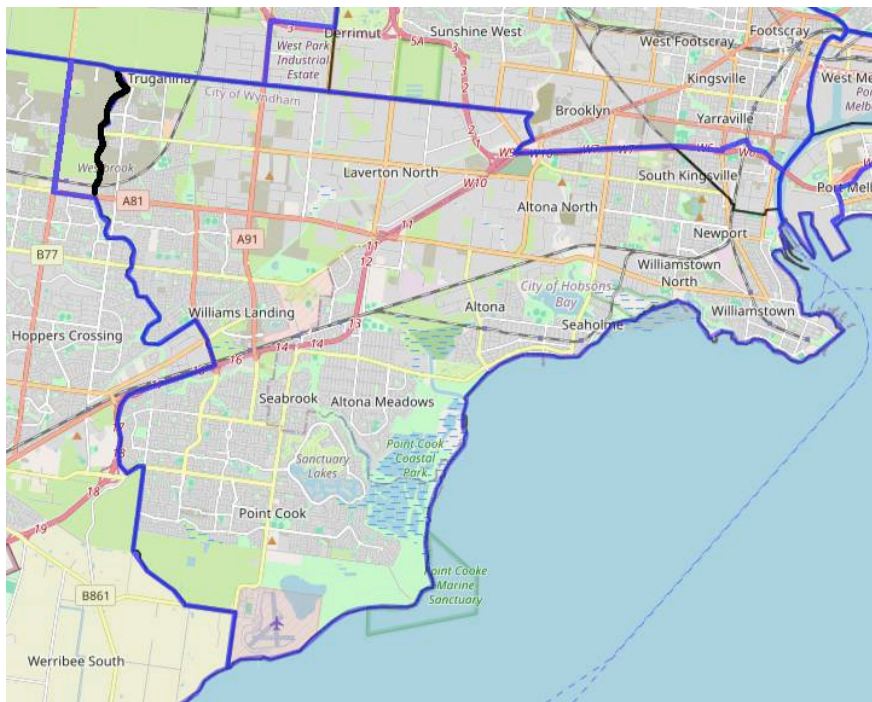
Hawke has solid boundaries and I see no reason it should change. Sunbury has some connections to Tullamarine airport but so do the suburbs in Maribyrnong. Similarly, the expansion into Lalor separates the very clear LGA boundary of Wyndham council. This area is only fourteen voters so I'm unclear what the rationale for having this area be in Hawke is. The AEC might like the idea of Lalor losing its rural components, but future growth in these areas will make them very connected to Werribee.

After Gellibrand gains the parts of Truganina and Laverton east of Werribee River, Lalor is .4% of a quota too high. Whilst ideally the Werribee River would be a solid boundary between the two seats, not crossing the river means that Little River and the Melbourne/Geelong boundary has to be crossed. Having Gellibrand take a tiny section of Truganina west of Werribee River is a far smaller disruption and there are much stronger ties between the two communities. I suggest putting the area of Tarneit between Leakes Rd and Derrimut Rd into Gellibrand.

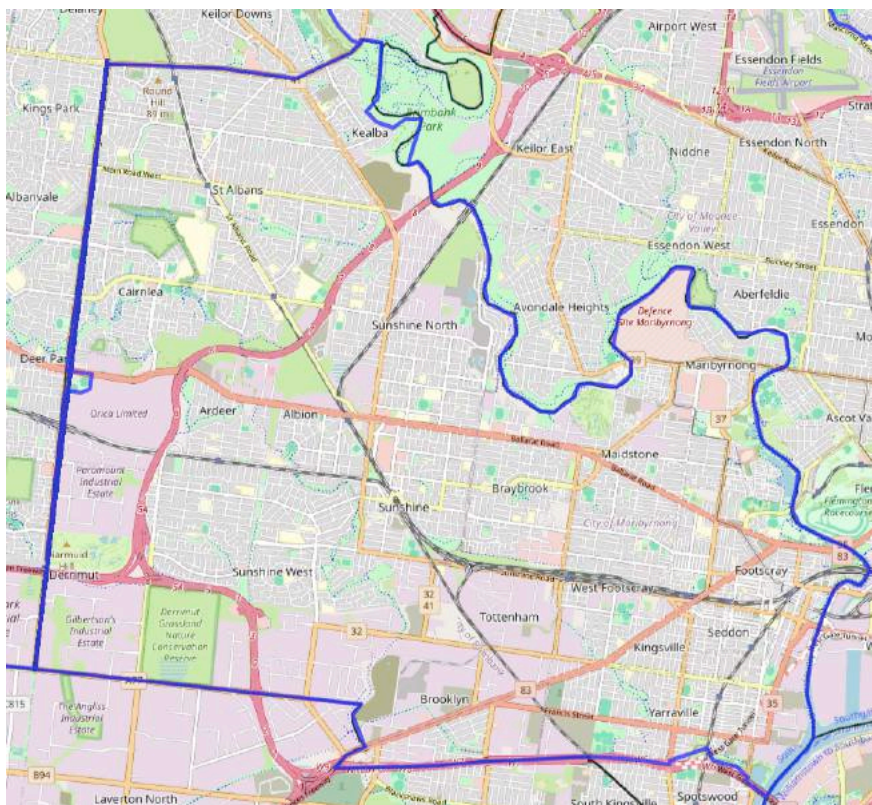


Lalor

For Gellibrand I propose a pretty small change and that is for Spotswood to stay in Gellibrand and for the West Gate Freeway to be the boundary between the two seats. This would be a very clear boundary and whilst there is some connection with Spotswood and the areas in Fraser, it is largely separated by the freeway.



Gellibrand

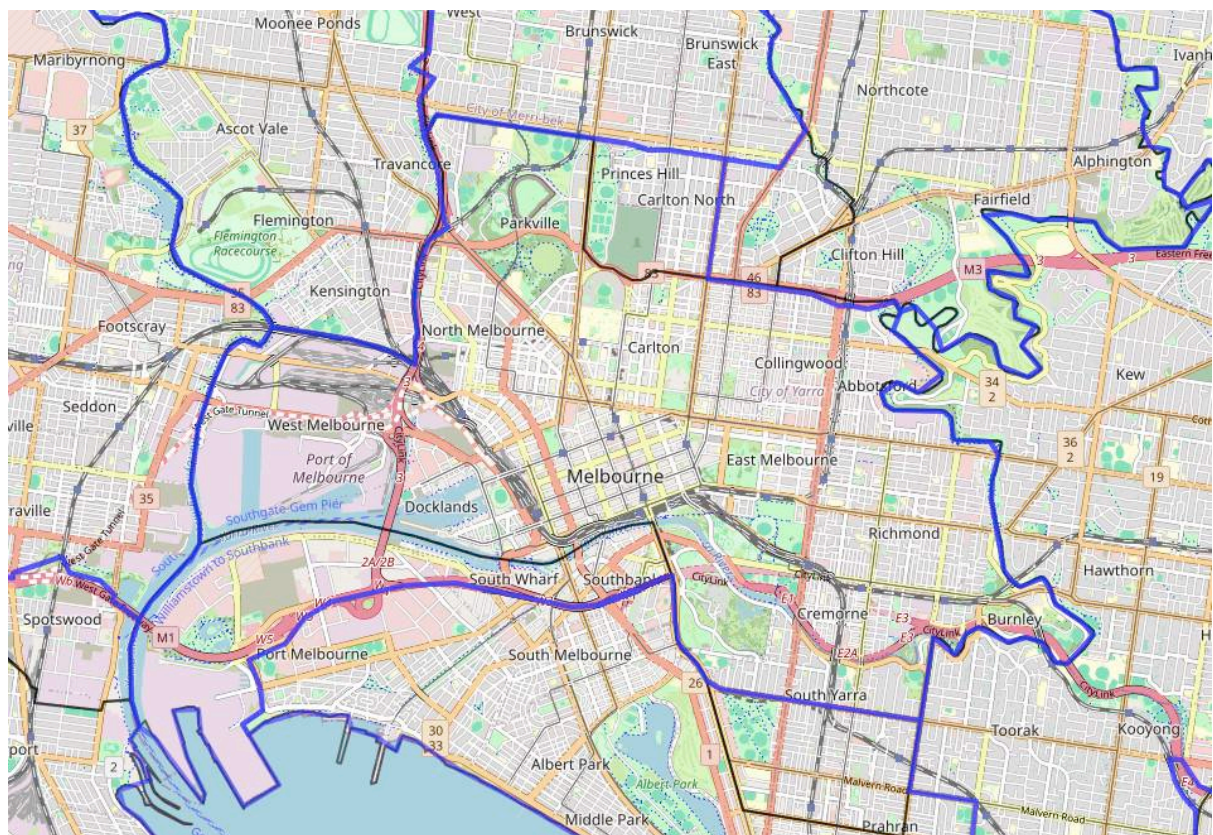


Fraser

Melbourne/Cooper/Wills

I agree that Melbourne should be the seat that crosses the Yarra. I argued for this in my suggestion and I'm happy the AEC has done it. However, having Melbourne extend all the way south to Prahran is not ideal. It'd be far better if Melbourne gained from the parts of Macnamara that are in the City of Melbourne. These areas are already connected through local government, the high amount of river crossings, being part of the CBD and a similar community living in high rise apartments.

I suggest having the boundary between Macnamara and Melbourne be the West Gate Freeway, CityLink and Grant St. This is a nice clear boundary between the north and the south. Melbourne would then take all of South Yarra that is north of Toorak Rd. These changes would also allow Melbourne to keep Carlton North where it can be united with the rest of Carlton.

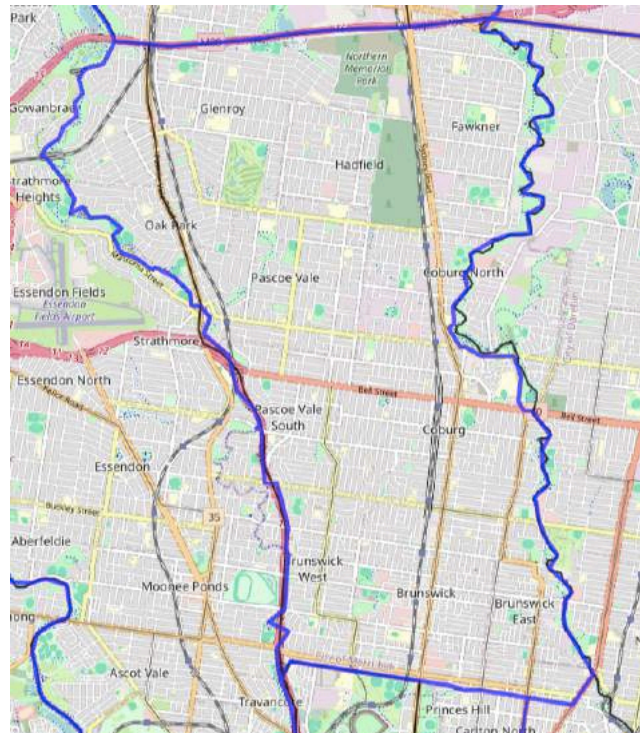


Melbourne

The AEC proposes putting Melbourne excess into Wills and I think there is some merit to this. I even argued for it in my initial proposal, but that was under the assumption of Wills losing its northern end as there is a lot of similarities with Glenroy, Fawkner, Hadfield and Campbellfield, Broadmeadows and Coolaroo. Oak Park and parts of Glenroy are much more separated from Maribyrnong which is a more western based seat. I think splitting Melbourne's excess more evenly between Cooper and Wills would be better.

- Will gains everything from Melbourne north of Park Street and West of St Georges Rd. This would be very similar to the boundaries Wills had with Melbourne from 2010-2018.
- Cooper gains the remainder of the Fitzroy North locality. Fitzroy North is connected to suburbs in Cooper like Northcote, Alphington, Fairfield and Clifton Hill.

As these changes would push Cooper over quota, I suggest sending the area east of Plenty Rd to Jagajaga. This area is quite removed from the remainder of the seat and would fit better in Jagajaga. This was the border between the two seats from 1999-2003.



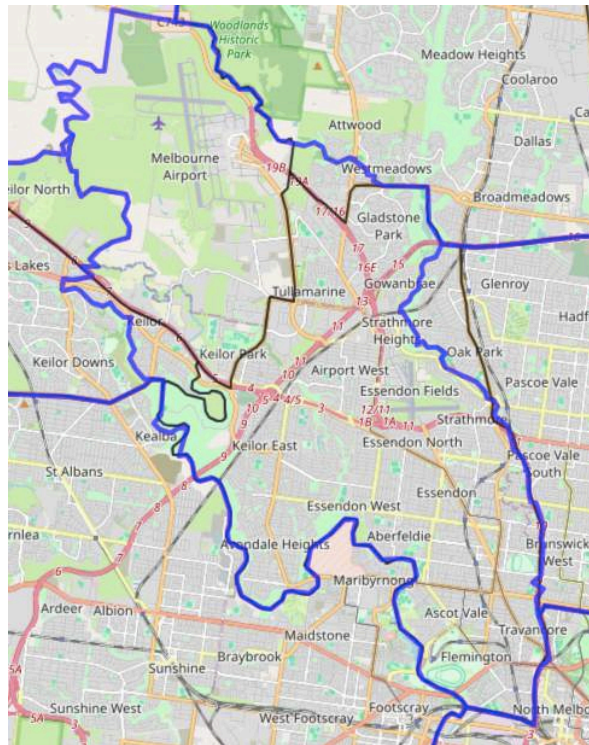
Wills



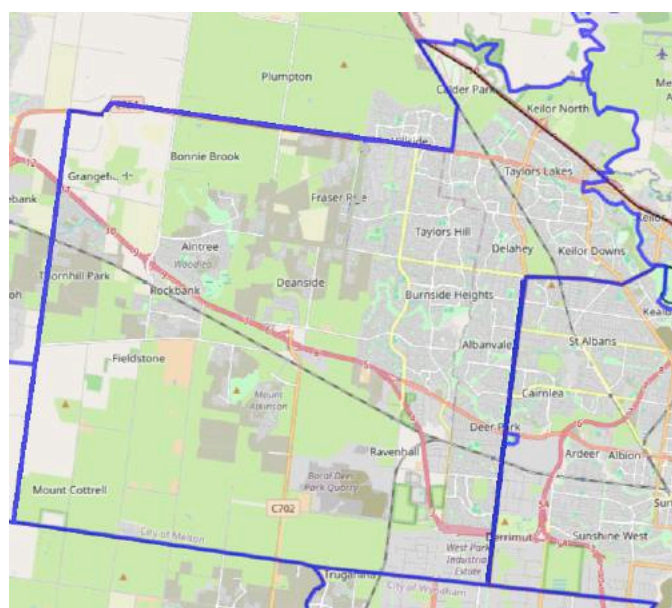
Cooper

Maribyrnong / Gorton / Calwell

I agree with Maribyrnong gaining the area of Wills west of City Link. That area fits better in a western division like Maribyrnong. Maribyrnong should continue following Moonee Ponds River and gain the area of Calwell west of it (following state seat of Sunbury boundaries). This would create a very neat eastern boundary of City Link and Moonee Ponds Creek. For Maribyrnong's western boundaries I suggest it gains the suburb of Keilor from Gorton except for the SA1: 21001122801. This would align the western boundary with Maribyrnong River and then Taylors Creek. This would be a very clear boundary for Maribyrnong, and would put most of the Keilor area in Maribyrnong.

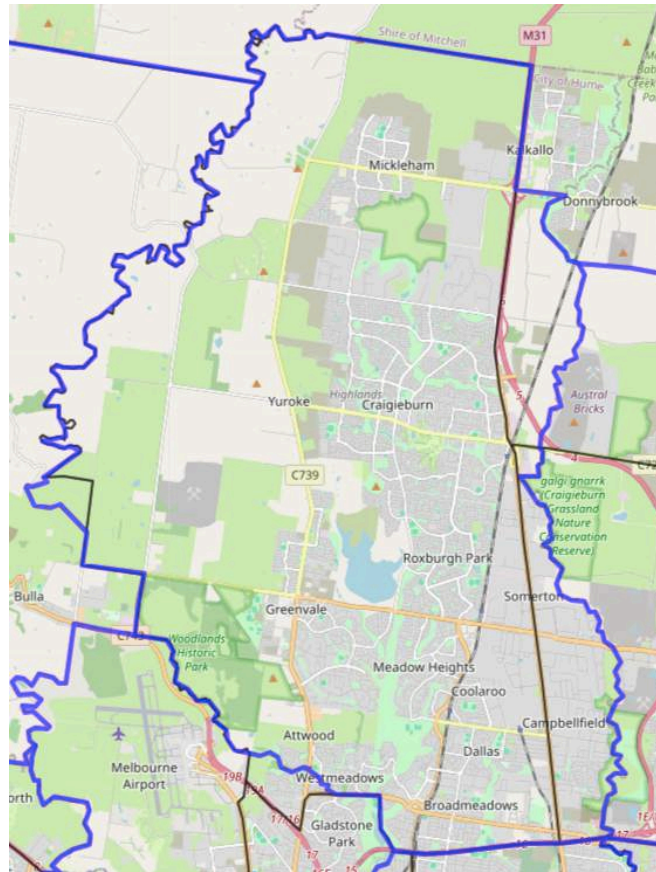


Maribyrnong



Gorton

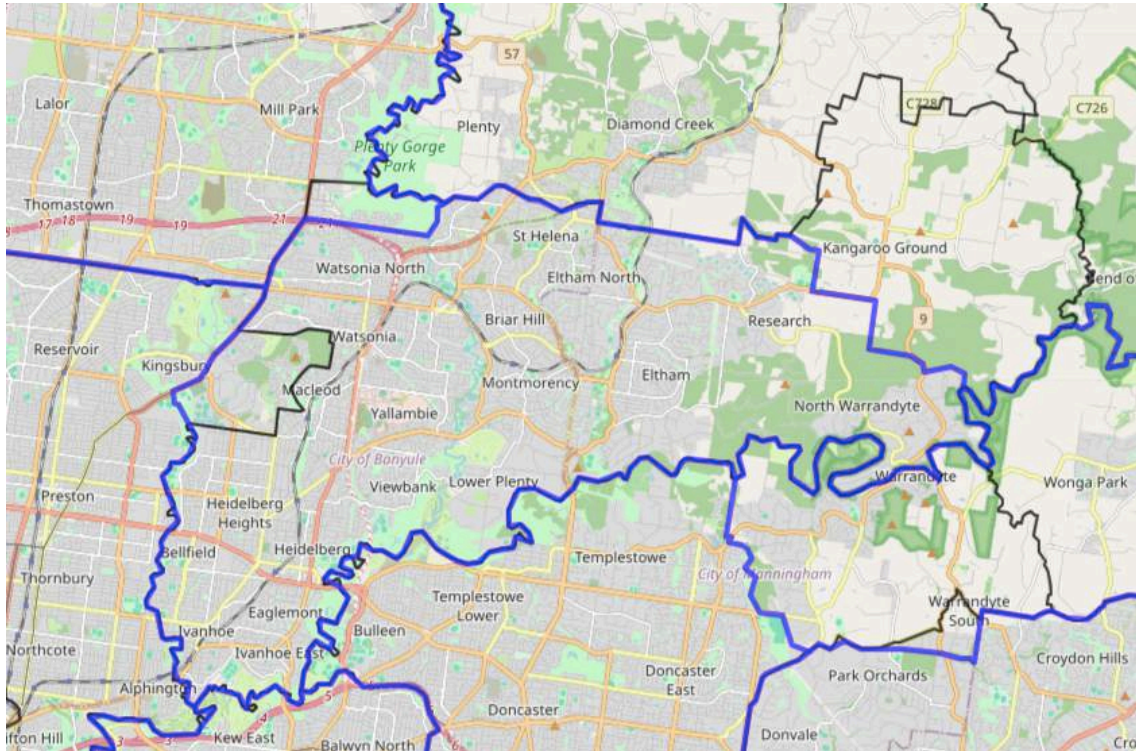
If Calwell loses that section to Maribyrnong, then it no longer has to make such drastic changes to its east to get to quota. Campbellfield is very connected to Broadmeadows and they should be in the same seat, it's largely separated from suburbs within Scullin. I think a better solution would be to just put the location of Kalkallo into McEwen. Kalkallo and Donnybrook are already very connected and would fit fine within McEwen.



Calwell

Jagajaga/Scullin/McEwen

Jagajaga should gain the area east of Plenty Rd. This area is more connected to parts of Jagajaga than Cooper. Jagajaga no longer needs to go into Scullin and has room to lose some voters to McEwen and I suggest Kangaroo Ground goes to McEwen. Kangaroo Ground is a more rural locality than the rest of Jagajaga and fits in with the rural parts of Nillumbik already in McEwen. It also helps to add some slow growth area to the seat of McEwen which has a problem of containing too many fast-growing suburbs.



Jagajaga

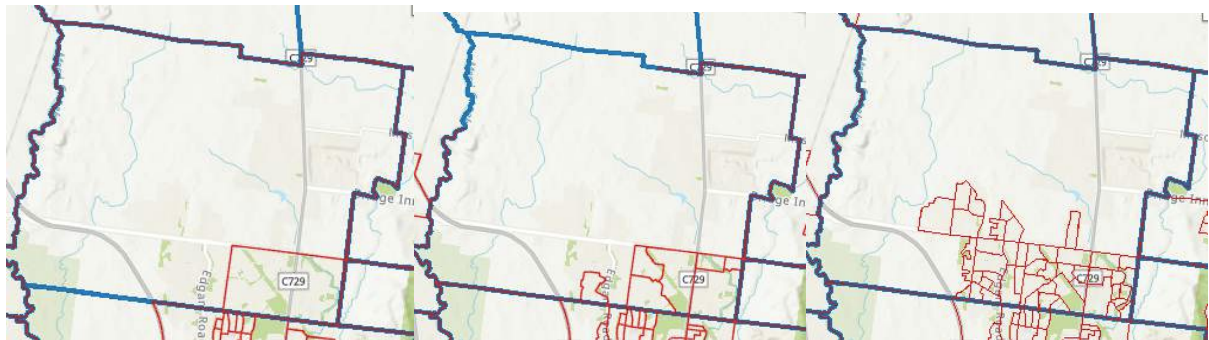
McEwen is one of the biggest seats in Melbourne, contains four different councils (soon to be five), borders regional, rural and Melbourne based seats and borders ten different seats. Because of this & it's fast growth, McEwen is an extremely important seat in any redistribution. I think with McEwen a few things should be done with the seat

- Kilmore should be transferred to Nicholls
- Woodend should be transferred to Bendigo
- McEwen should gain Kalkallo

The question then becomes how to draw the border between McEwen and Scullin. Whilst the AEC's proposal to put the rest of Mernda – South SA2 into Scullin has a lot of merit too it, I think the AEC should use this time to realign McEwen and Scullin as Mernda and Wollert based seats. McEwen takes Scullin's section of Mernda, and Scullin takes McEwen's section of Wollert.

These two suburbs are currently separated in half by Craigieburn Rd. When the redistribution in 2010 adopted the Craigieburn Rd as the northern boundary between Scullin and McEwen there was very few people who lived in Wollert who would have lived north of Craigieburn Rd. Because of massive growth in this area, the people of Wollert are currently

split in half by the current boundary. This will only continue to get worse with growth in Wollert.



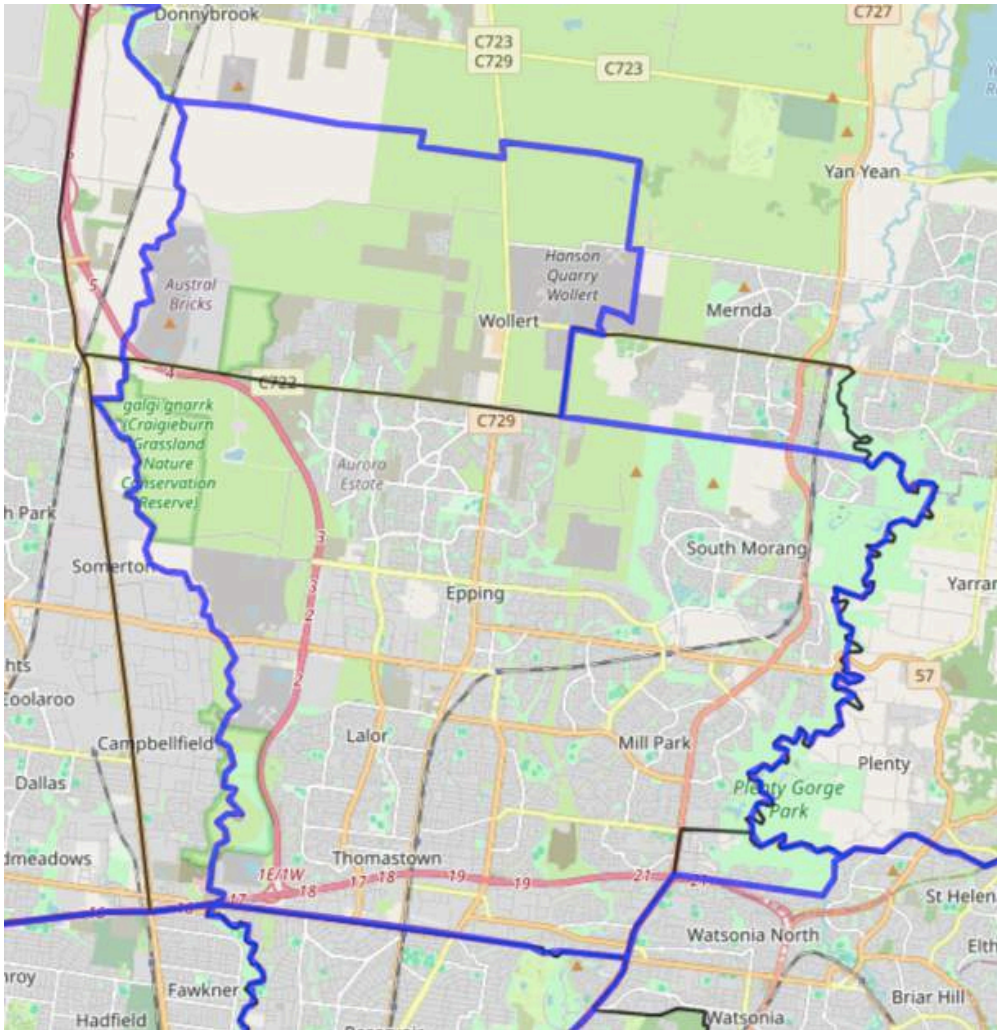
Map of growth in the suburb of Wollert. 2011 (left), 2016 (middle) and 2021 (right), using SA1's (in red) to show population increase. Craigieburn Rd is no longer a good boundary.

The section of Wollert currently in McEwen has a growth rate of 128.64%. This is making McEwen very difficult to draw. The section of Mernda currently in Scullin has a growth rate of -5.40%. The swap of Wollert and Mernda would help add some fast-growing areas to a slower growing seat in Scullin and add some slow growing areas to a fast-growing area in McEwen. McEwen should also not lose any of Nillumbik council to Casey. This is a very clear border and McEwen needs to keep as many slow growing communities as possible.

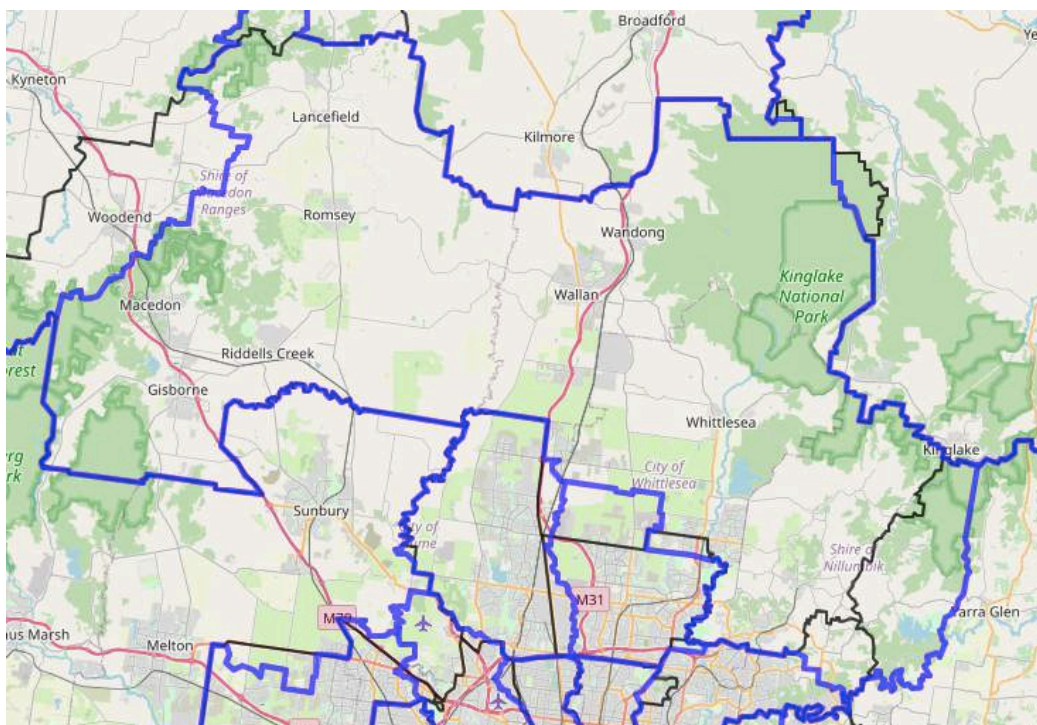
	Growth in AEC proposal	Growth in my proposal
McEwen	21.57%	18.35%
Scullin	10.19%	13.66%

Growth of the AEC proposed McEwen and Scullin compared to my proposed McEwen and Scullin.

I think it is important to try and spread, as much as possible, the growth suburbs with different seats. Uniting Wollert in Scullin, and uniting Mernda in McEwen goes a long way of doing that. This will give the AEC more freedom in the future to draw boundaries for these two seats.



Scullin

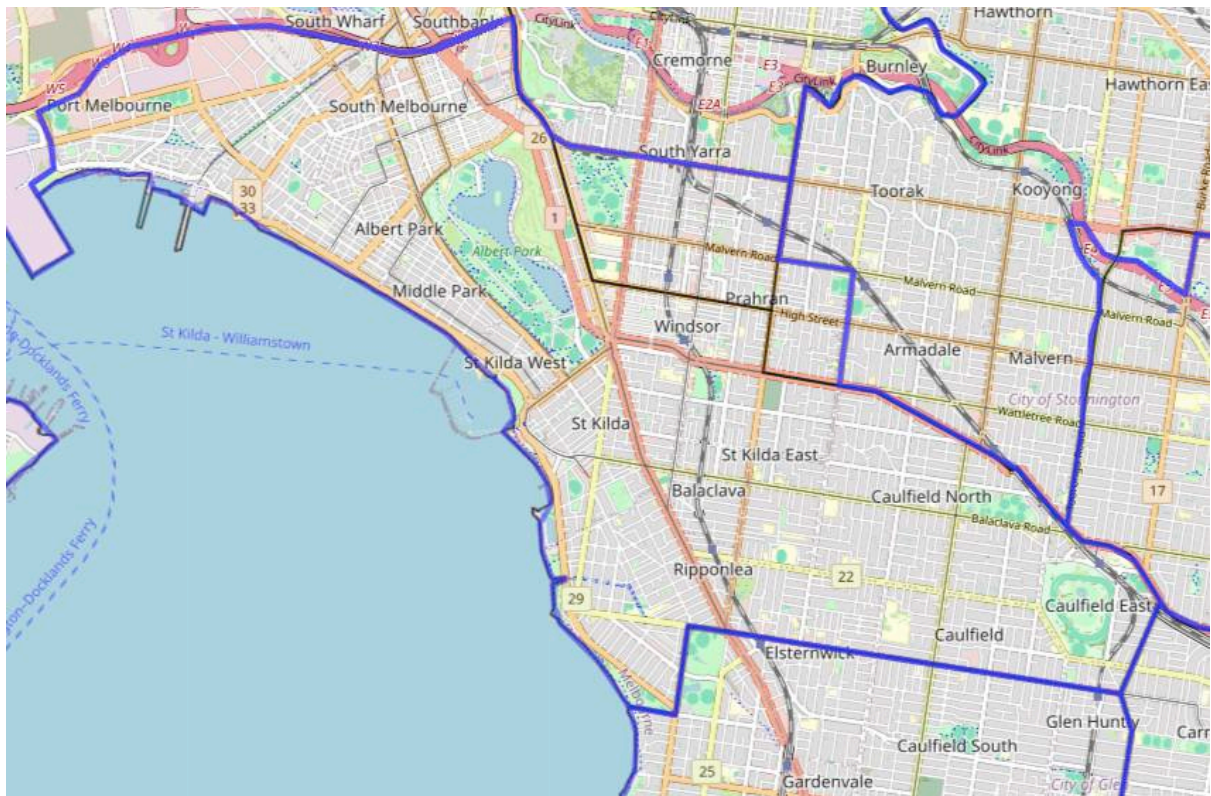


McEwen

Macnamara/Kooyong/Chisholm/Hotham/Goldstein/Isaacs

With the abolition of Higgins this area undergoes a massive amount of change. I found the proposals in this area to be mostly good, but with each seat having an area that would be better suited to another seat. I am going to propose a bit of a “pass the parcel” between the seats above to fix the main issue with these seats.

Macnamara undergoes the above changes and then gains the rest of Prahran from Kooyong. This would unite all of Prahran, Windsor and most of South Yarra in the seat of Macnamara. There has been much discussion about if Macnamara should contain Caulfield or the western part of Stonnington council, my proposal would allow for it to have both. Even without any changes to the Melbourne/Macnamara boundary, Macnamara can still gain Kooyong’s section of Prahran, I would highly encourage this.



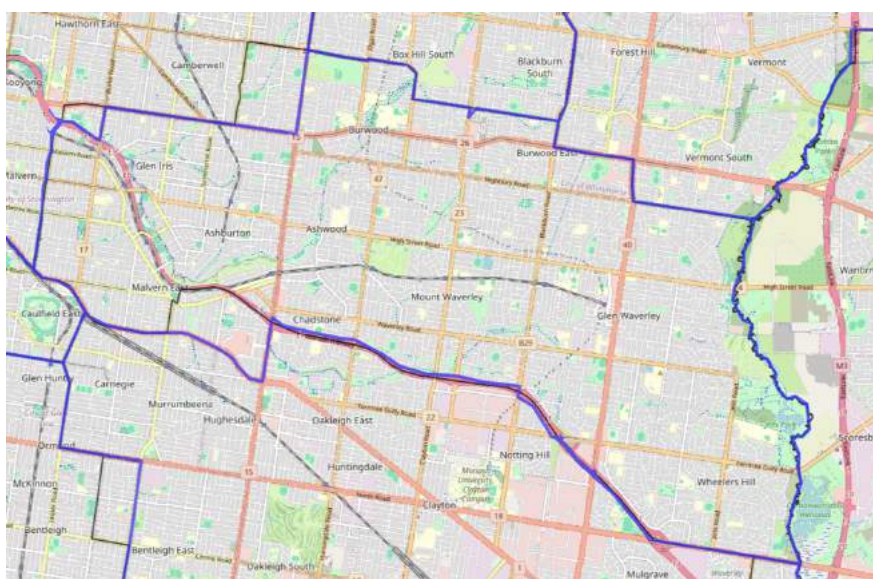
Macnamara

Once Kooyong loses Prahran, it can then gain the section of Camberwell in Chisholm. This unites the suburb of Camberwell in Kooyong. I also propose it gain a small section of Glen Iris that is north of Monash Freeway and west of Burke Rd to help unite the Stonnington and Boroondara council sections of the seat more.



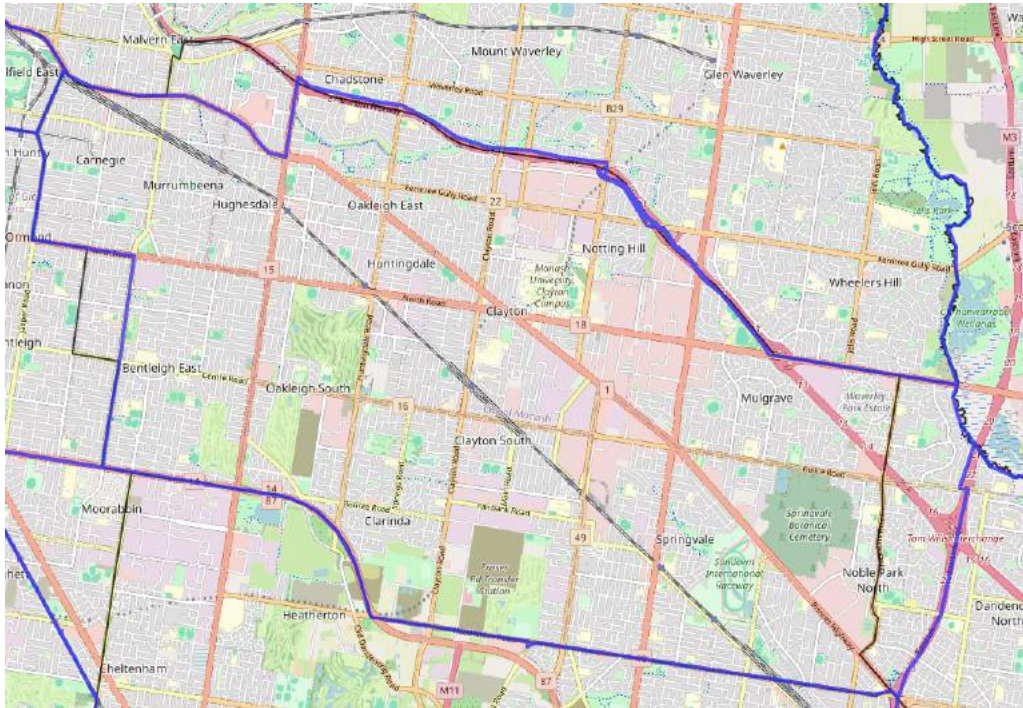
Kooyong

Chisholm after losing Camberwell can then gain the rest of Malvern East from Hotham. This unites Malvern East in Chisholm, and prevents Stonnington being split into five seats. Malvern East fits in Chisholm as Chisholm becomes based on the middle to upper income parts of eastern Melbourne.



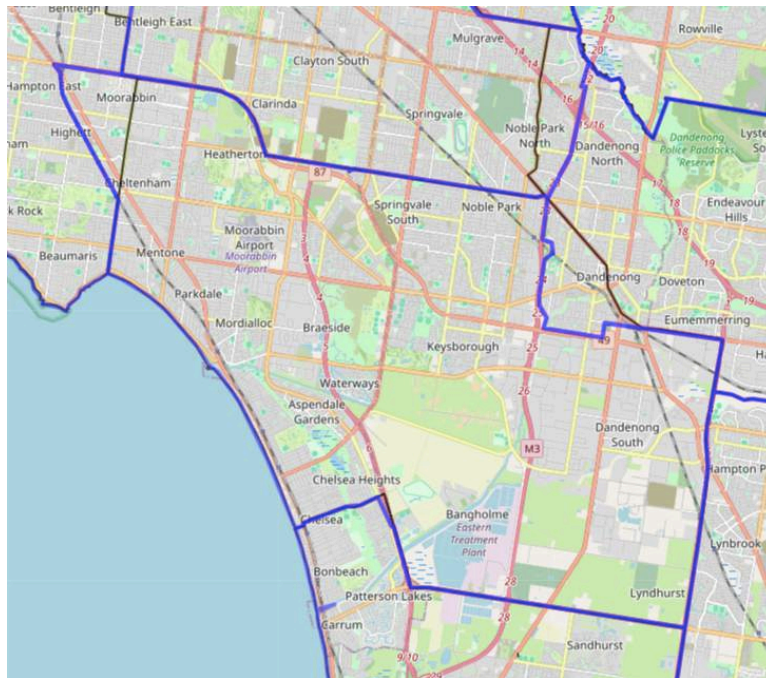
Chisholm

Hotham, after losing Malvern East, can become much more of a Dandenong Council based seat by shifting east and using the eastern freeway as it's eastern border. This would also allow Mulgrave to be united in Hotham. As Hotham is than over quota, it can now lose the remainder of Bentleigh East that is west of East Boundary Rd to Goldstein. This is a very good boundary between the two seats.



Isaacs then loses all of its section of the suburb of Dandenong to Bruce, uniting the suburb mostly in Bruce. Dandenong council is still split between three seats but with a clear theme for each of them: Bruce contains the Dandenong part, Isaacs contains the Keysborough area and Hotham contains most of Springvale and Nobel Park.

These changes would go a long way of fixing a lot of the main issues that were caused by the abolition of Higgins. Prahran goes from being split between two seats to united in Macnamara, Camberwell gets united in Kooyong, Malvern East is united in Chisholm, Mulgrave is united in Hotham and Dandenong is united in Bruce.

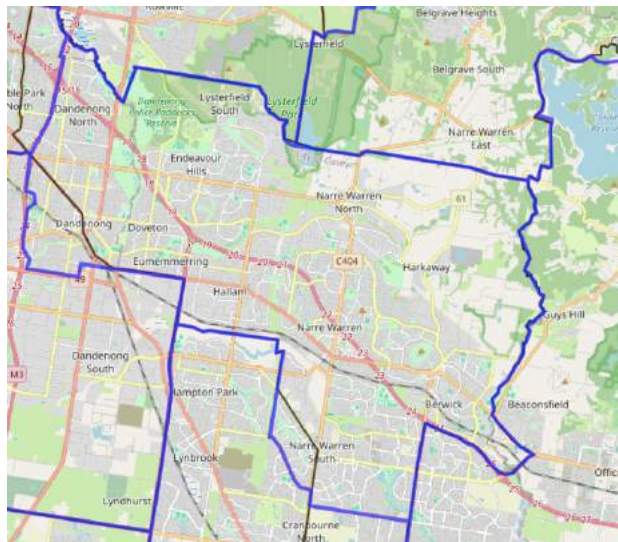


Isaacs

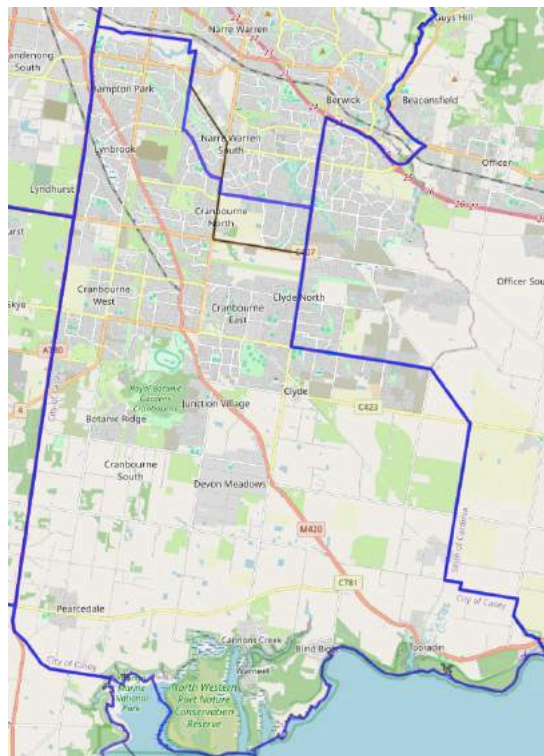
Bruce/Holt

Holt is over quota and needs to lose voters to Bruce. Holt is a Cranbourne based seat and Bruce is a Narre Warren based seat. Because of this it makes more sense for Bruce to gain most of the remaining section of Narre Warren South that is still in Holt. North of Ormond Rd can be sent to Bruce and Holt can keep Cranbourne North – East SA2. This helps to keep Bruce a Narre Warren, Berwick and Dandenong based seat and Holt a Cranbourne based seat. The changes to Bruce and Holt can be made without changing any other seat.

I'd encourage the AEC to use this boundary instead. If a section of Cranbourne gets put into Bruce, it'll be a very hard to reverse in a later redistribution. In the long-term Bruce should be a northern Casey based seat and Holt a southern Casey LGA based seat.



Bruce



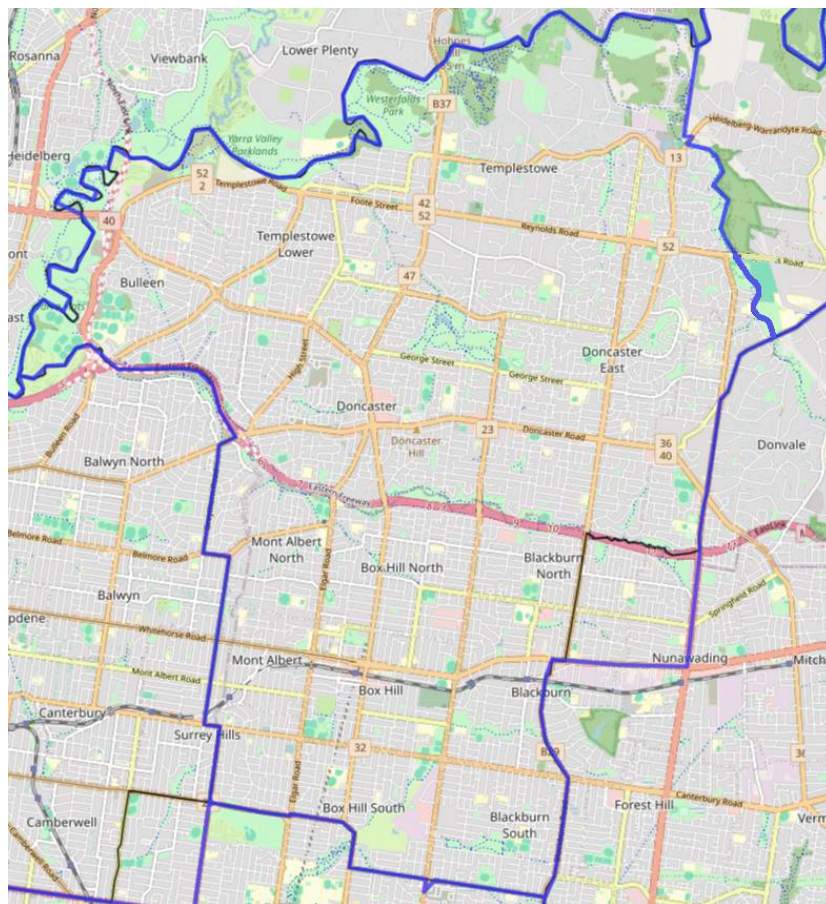
Holt

Deakin/Menzies/Casey

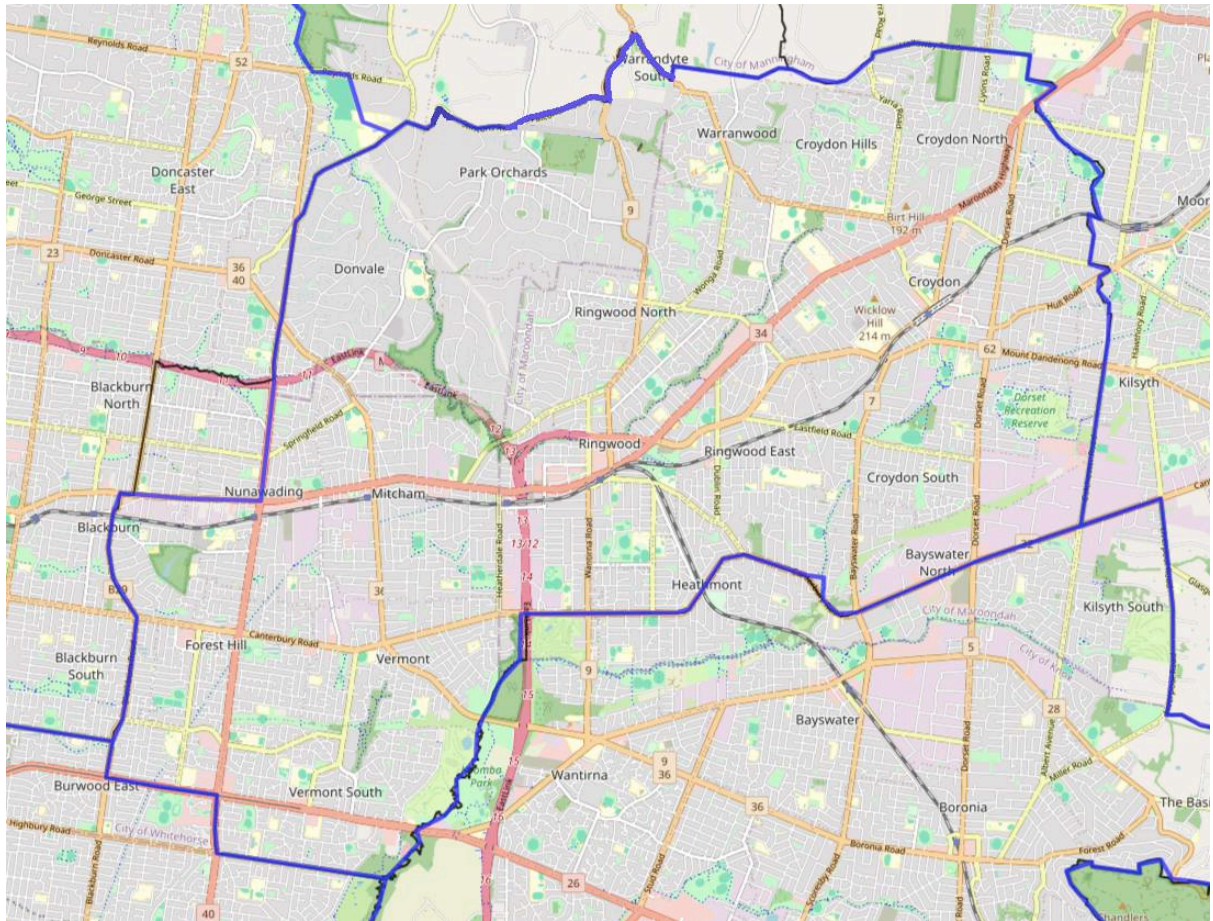
I support the AEC proposal to turn Menzies and Deakin into north/south seats. However, Menzies extends further south into Box Hill (which I support) but still keeps the rural part of Manningham council. This means the seat extends all the way into very suburban Box Hill along with keeping the very rural Warrandyte.

I suggest instead putting the area east of Mullum Mullum Creek into Casey except for SA1: 20702115932. This would prevent Casey from having to extend into Nillumbik Shire which is a very solid boundary. Warrandyte is a very rural area similar to a lot of the communities in Casey. Warrandyte was in Casey, a Yarra Ranges based seat from 1968-1994. The AEC is already proposing to put Wonga Park into Casey, so going a little further to add Warrandyte would work well.

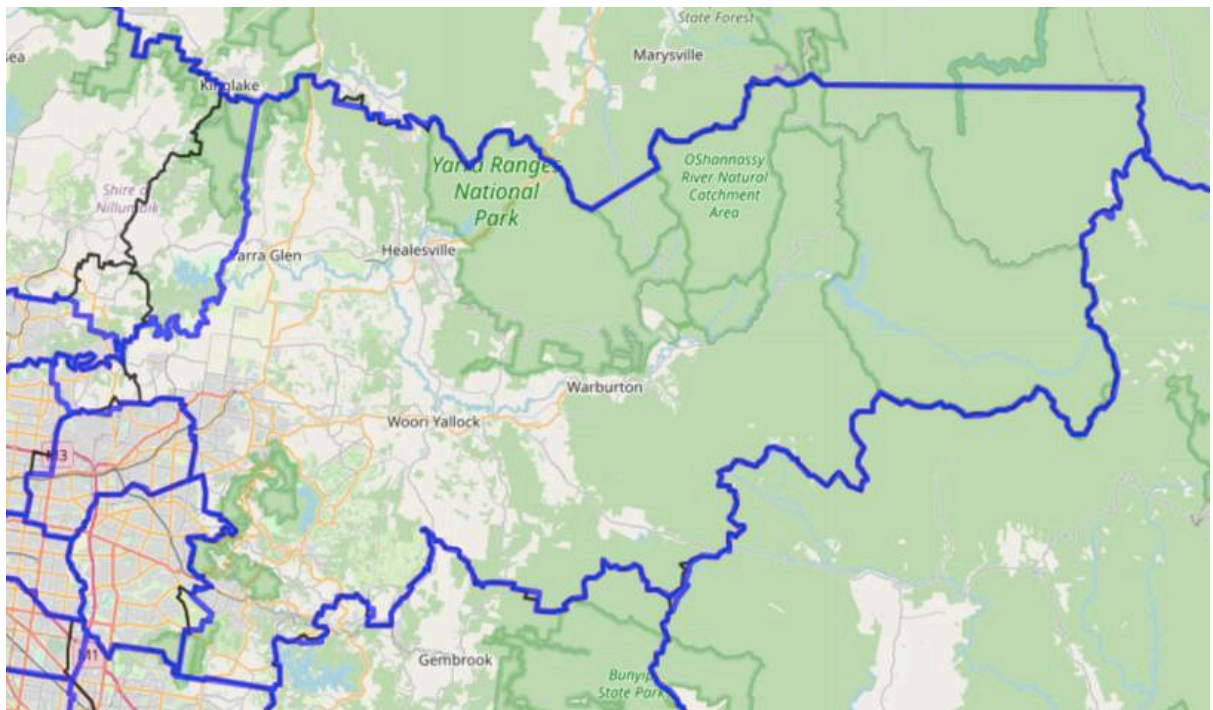
Lastly, I would suggest Menzies keep the area between the Eastern Freeway, Surrey Rd, Whitehorse Rd and Springvale Rd, allowing for Menzies to remain most of the Blackburn area.



Menzies



Deakin

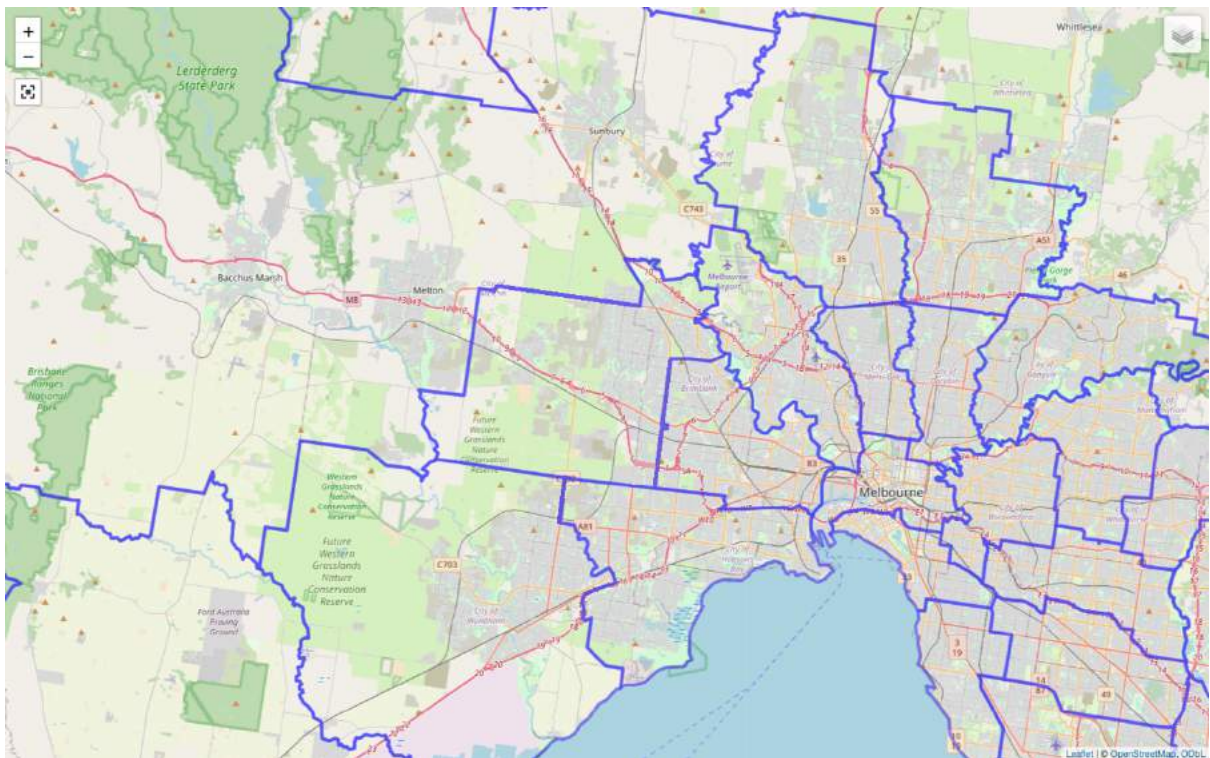


Casey

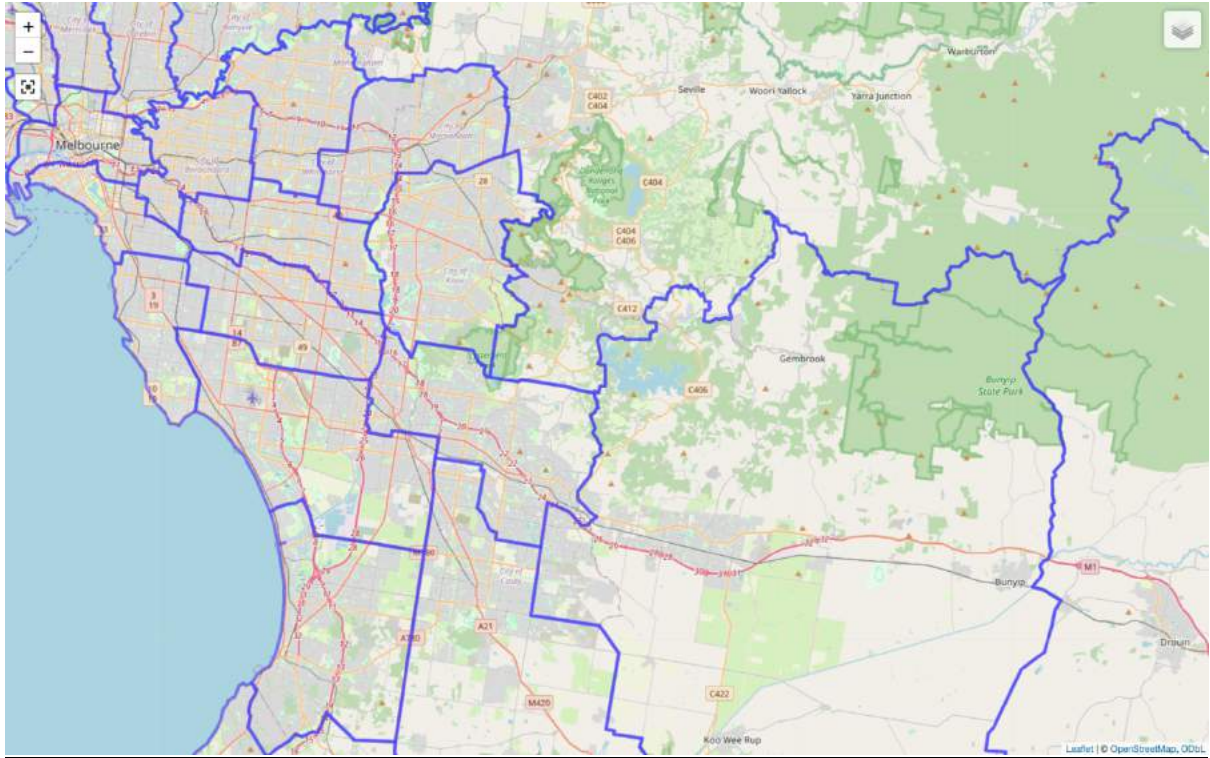
Maps



Melbourne



Northern and Western Melbourne



Eastern Melbourne



Victoria

Thanks

Big thanks to Kevin Chen and James Punch for putting together easy to use redistribution toolkits that were a massive help. I would not have been able to do this without them.