



THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
TASMANIA

Submission OB88

Southern Midlands Council



SUBMISSION PREPARED IN RESPONSE TO THE AUSTRALIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION'S DRAFT REPORT ON THE PROPOSED REDISTRIBUTION OF TASMANIA'S FEDERAL ELECTORAL DIVISIONS

Introduction

Southern Midlands Council appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the proposed redistribution of Tasmania's federal electoral divisions.

Council notes that the draft plan will move 113,884 electors (27.56% of electors) into different electorates and recognises the importance of electoral boundaries that reflect communities of interest, regional relationships, and effective representation.

In this context, Council supports:

- the retention of Glenorchy City Council within the Division of Clark;
- the inclusion of Derwent Valley Council within the Division of Clark; and
- the retention of Brighton Council within the Division of Lyons.

Maintaining these arrangements reflects the distinct metropolitan and regional communities of interest for the reasons as outlined below.

1. Community of Interest – Glenorchy and the Hobart Metropolitan Area

The City of Glenorchy is predominantly a metro local government area and forms a core part of the Greater Hobart metropolitan region. Residents share strong social, economic and transport connections with Hobart.

These connections include:

- integrated urban transport networks
- shared employment and education catchments
- access to regional health and community services; and
- coordinated planning and infrastructure delivery across the metropolitan area.

ABS Census 2021 *Journey to Work Data* shows 59.5% of Glenorchy residents work outside the municipality, with Hobart being the primary destination for 9,271 people (39.3%.)

Including Glenorchy within Lyons would weaken representational coherence for a community whose issues – urban renewal, housing supply, congestion, and service delivery – are closely aligned with those of metropolitan Hobart. It would also risk splitting communities of interest and local government areas across multiple electorates.

Retaining Glenorchy within the Division of Clark recognises these metropolitan linkages and ensures representation aligns with the interests and priorities of the Greater Hobart urban community.

2. Community of Interest – Greater Hobart and Derwent Valley corridor

The Derwent River corridor provides a defining geographic and economic link between Hobart, Glenorchy, and the Derwent Valley.

While Glenorchy is clearly part of the Hobart metropolitan area, the Derwent Valley also maintains strong and increasing connections to this urban system, including:

- commuting patterns into Hobart and Glenorchy;
- shared access to education, health, and retail services;
- transport linkages along the Lyell Highway corridor; and
- increasing population movement and lifestyle-driven migration from urban to peri-urban areas.

These trends demonstrate that the Derwent Valley is not solely a rural hinterland, but increasingly part of a functional Greater Hobart region.

Including the Derwent Valley within the Division of Clark reflects this evolving and integrated community of interest.

3. Community of Interest – Brighton and Southern Midlands

Direct reference is made to the opinion piece published in *The Mercury* on 17 March 2026, authored by Brighton Mayor Leigh Gray.

Southern Midlands Council strongly supports the sentiments expressed in that article, including the following:

“Brighton’s identity remains closely connected to its rural and regional history. Brighton is a hub for its subregions of Southern Midlands and Central Highlands and is where many from those communities come for education, shopping, medical services and sport. Indeed we often undertake joint actions and programs, such as our Southcentral Jobs-Hub and sub-regional infrastructure planning.”

These observations highlight Brighton's important role as a regional service centre and its strong functional connections with neighbouring rural municipalities, including the Southern Midlands and Central Highlands.

The article further notes that this role would be significantly diminished if Brighton were to be included within the Division of Franklin. Such a change would create an electoral disconnect between Brighton and the rural and regional communities that rely upon it and with which it maintains strong social, economic, and service-based relationships.

Maintaining Brighton within the Division of Lyons ensures that these established regional linkages are preserved and that representation continues to reflect the shared interests of these interconnected communities.

4. Local Government, Regional Planning & Economic Connections.

Councils across southern Tasmania frequently collaborate on regional matters, including infrastructure planning, land use planning (Southern TAS Regional Land Use Strategy), emergency management, economic development and environmental management. Many Councils also participate in resource sharing arrangements.

Electoral boundaries that align with the natural metropolitan and regional divisions, as well as physical features, support clearer representation and stronger advocacy at the federal level.

The relationships between Glenorchy and the Derwent Valley include:

- shared infrastructure pressures (particularly transport and housing)
- economic interdependence, including tourism and service industries
- coordinated planning considerations across the Greater Hobart region (via STRLUS)

A single federal electorate encompassing these interconnected areas would support more coherent advocacy for regional infrastructure investment and regional priorities

The River Derwent remains a defining physical feature that has shaped, and continues to shape, patterns of settlement, communication, and travel across the region.

5. Clarity and Stability for Communities

Maintaining stable electoral boundaries where possible helps minimise confusion for residents, community organisations, and businesses. Continuity of representation also supports effective working relationships between elected representatives, Councils, and regional stakeholders.

Retaining Glenorchy within Clark and including the Derwent Valley within Clark promotes this stability while recognising the evolving relationship between metropolitan and peri-urban communities.

Conclusion

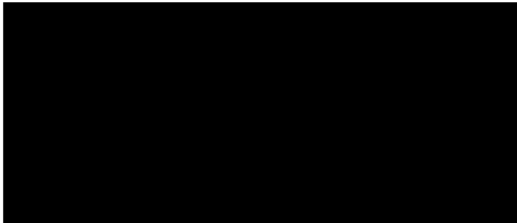
Southern Midlands Council supports the retention of:

- the retention of Glenorchy City Council within the Division of Clark;
- the inclusion of Derwent Valley Council within the Division of Clark; and
- the retention of Brighton Council within the Division of Lyons.

Numerical feasibility and projected enrolment quota and parameters aside, these arrangements reflect the natural metropolitan and regional communities of interest within southern Tasmania and support effective representation of both urban and regional communities.

Additionally, population projections indicate that the Derwent Valley Council's population is expected to grow between 12,300 and 13,500 by 2046, with recent trends already demonstrating strong growth. Including the Derwent Valley within Clark would achieve a more balanced distribution of growth areas across the electorate.

Signed



Edwin Batt
MAYOR

27th March 2026