



Submission S14

Brighton Council



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Date: 6 November 2025

Redistribution Committee for Tasmania
Australian Electoral Commission
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Dear Sir/Madam

TASMANIAN FEDERAL REDISTRIBUTION: ROUND 1 - IDEAS

Brighton Council Officers welcome the opportunity to provide a submission to Round 1 of the Tasmanian federal redistribution ('the redistribution').

This is a matter of critical importance to the future prosperity, equity, and governance of our community. We believe there is a compelling case for maintaining the current electoral boundaries as they relate to the Brighton municipality. In particular, we strongly oppose any proposal that would see part of the Brighton municipality included in the electorate of Clark, or our municipality split into more than one electorate. We firmly advocate that the entire Brighton municipality should remain wholly within the electorate of Lyons.

This submission specifically addresses the boundaries between the electorates of Lyons and Clarke and is made in accordance with the redistribution criteria outlined in Section 66 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

Summary of Key Points:

- Brighton is a diverse, youthful, and rapidly growing community.
- Despite this growth, parts of our municipality experience significant socio-economic disadvantage, with many residents reliant on government support—both financial and in terms of social infrastructure.
- It is essential that Brighton Council continues to operate within a clearly defined governance structure, with parliamentary representation focused solely on the needs of Lyons.
- Splitting the municipality between two electorates would dilute representation, create confusion, and risk undermining the delivery of services and advocacy for our community.
- Despite more recent urbanisation, the identity of our communities remain far more aligned with that of Lyons than of the predominantly inner city electorate of Clark.
- Due to our large and growing population, adding Brighton to Clark would simply result in Clark becoming too populous and Lyons too small.

We thank the Redistribution Committee for considering this submission and urge that the integrity of the Brighton municipality within the Lyons electorate be preserved.

Community of interests within the proposed electorate including economic, social and regional interests

Brighton Council is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Tasmania. Between 2009 and 2023, the population grew from approximately 15,000 to over 20,000. According to Tasmanian Population Projections (TasPOPP), Brighton's population is expected to grow from about 20,000 to 25,000 by 2046, at an average annual growth rate of around 1.3–1.4%—more than double the projected statewide average of 0.5% per year.

Brighton is the youngest municipality in Tasmania, with a median age of 34.9 years, compared to the state median of 42.3. It is also the only municipality in Tasmania with sustained positive natural population growth—that is, births continue to exceed deaths, unlike most other LGAs in the state. This is particularly significant given that Tasmania's overall population is projected to enter natural decline around 2030, driven by an ageing population and low fertility rates.¹

Brighton has a diverse population, with 11.6% of residents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, compared to 5.4% statewide.²

Brighton ranks among the most disadvantaged municipalities in Tasmania. According to the ABS SEIFA Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage, suburbs such as Bridgewater, Gagebrook, and Herdsmans Cove score in the lowest decile nationally, reflecting historical policy decisions by state and federal governments that concentrated public housing on the urban fringe with limited access to services.

Brighton also continues to play an important sub-regional role, with a catchment extending into the municipalities of Southern Midlands and Central Highlands. These municipalities rely on Brighton for access to a range of services, as demonstrated in Council's recent Activity Centre Strategy.

These factors collectively demonstrate that Brighton's community interests are best represented within a unified electorate, ensuring consistent governance and advocacy tailored to its unique profile.

Means of communication and travel within the proposed electorate

Many residents in Brighton Council's more disadvantaged suburbs experience what is known as "transport poverty"—limited access to private vehicles combined with inadequate public transport options. This significantly affects access to employment, education, healthcare, and other essential services.

According to the 2021 Census, the average number of motor vehicles per dwelling in Brighton is 2.1, which is slightly above the Tasmanian average. However, this figure masks significant variation across the municipality. In suburbs such as Bridgewater, Gagebrook, and

¹ https://www.lgat.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0033/1855068/Tasmanias-Population-The-Current-Reality-August-2025.pdf

² <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/SAL60075>

Herdsmans Cove, car ownership rates are considerably lower, and reliance on public transport is higher. Unfortunately, public transport services in these areas remain infrequent and poorly connected, exacerbating social and economic disadvantage.

Brighton Council continues to advocate for improved public transport infrastructure and service frequency, particularly for vulnerable and low-income residents. This advocacy is most effective when the municipality is represented as a single, cohesive electorate, with shared demographic characteristics and policy priorities.

Maintaining Brighton within one federal electorate ensures that transport disadvantage can be addressed holistically, rather than fragmented across electorates with differing priorities and competing interests. This is essential for delivering equitable access to services and supporting inclusive regional development.

Physical features and areas in the proposed electorate (i.e. prominent geographic features)

Brighton municipality is geographically cohesive, located entirely on the northern side of the Derwent River, which serves as a prominent natural boundary separating Brighton from the urban areas of Hobart. This physical divide reinforces Brighton's distinct identity and regional character, setting it apart from the more metropolitan communities within the electorate of Clarke on the southern side of the river.

Brighton shares stronger geographic and demographic ties with neighbouring municipalities such as the Southern Midlands and Central Highlands, which also lie north of the Derwent. These areas increasingly rely on Brighton for access to a range of services.

The municipality includes a mix of semi-rural and residential suburbs, such as Brighton, Pontville, Bridgewater, Gagebrook, Herdsmans Cove, and Old Beach. These communities are connected by key transport routes like the Midland Highway, which link Brighton to Greater Hobart and northern Tasmania.

Together, these geographic features support a unified community identity and planning framework. Maintaining Brighton within a single federal electorate ensures that representation aligns with the region's physical landscape and shared interests.

The existing boundaries for that electorate

Brighton municipality is currently located entirely within the federal electorate of Lyons, which aligns well with its geographic, demographic, and socio-economic profile. These boundaries support cohesive representation, allowing Brighton's unique needs—such as rapid population growth, transport disadvantage, and socio-economic vulnerability—to be addressed in a unified and strategic manner.

Maintaining the current boundaries ensures that Brighton continues to receive focused and consistent representation, without the fragmentation or confusion that would result from being split across electorates.

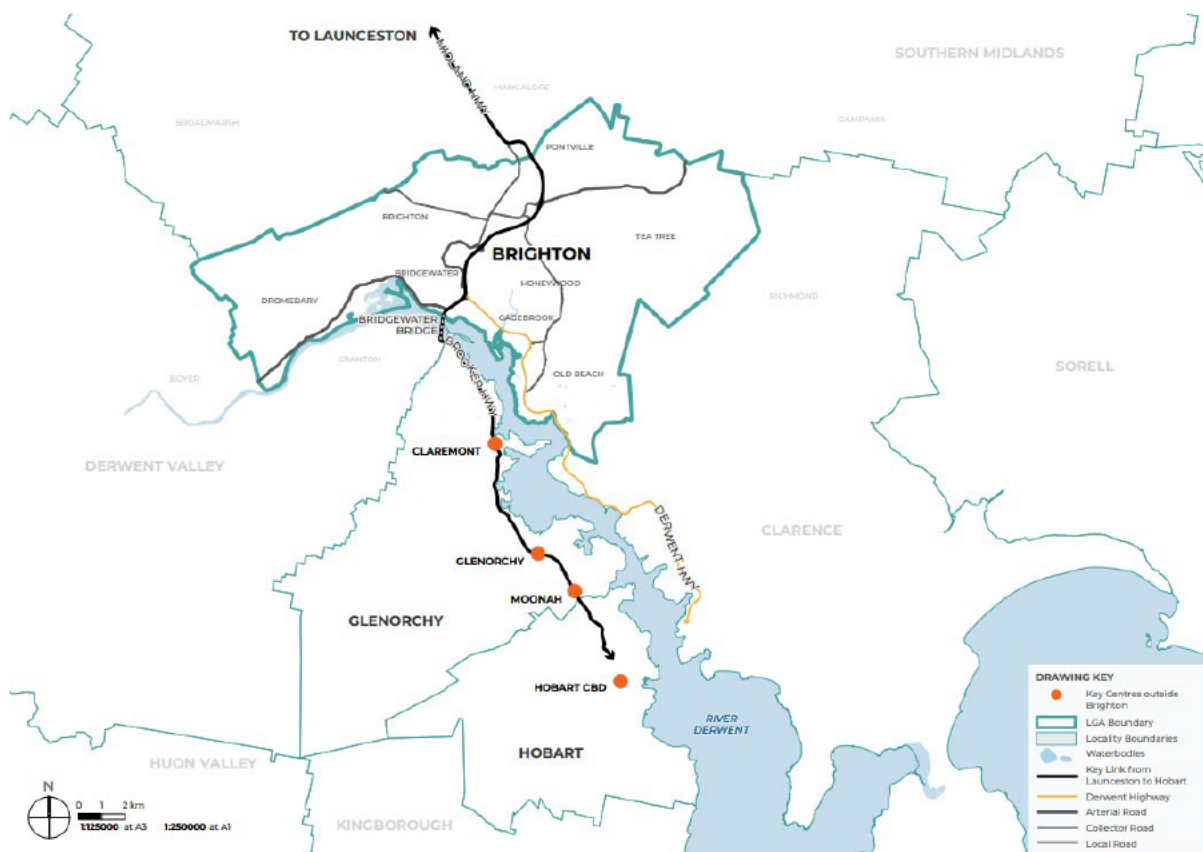


Figure 1 Existing LGA wholly within Lyons

Conclusion

Brighton Council's brief submission makes a clear case for keeping the entire municipality within the federal electorate of Lyons. It highlights Brighton's rapid growth, youthful population, and unique challenges like transport disadvantage and socio-economic vulnerability. The submission also points out Brighton's geographic cohesion north of the Derwent River and its strong ties to neighbouring rural municipalities. Splitting Brighton between electorates would risk weakening representation and service delivery. The Council urges the Redistribution Committee to maintain the current boundaries to ensure consistent governance and advocacy for the community.

Yours faithfully

James Dryburgh
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER