



Comment on objections 3

Dick Gross

5 pages

15 April 2021

Dear Committee

My name is Dick Gross. For many years since 1996 I have held a number of roles in the City of Port Phillip as Councillor, Deputy Mayor and Mayor (with my most recent term finishing in 2019).

I think that the Committee's proposal to move parts of St Kilda East, Elsternwick, Balaclava and Ripponlea into Higgins is highly undesirable for a number of reasons.

This proposal would divide the City of Port Phillip across two federal electorates. As far as I can recall, the City of Port Phillip has always been contained in Macnamara or Melbourne Ports. The City no doubt represents a community of interest. A significant part of our role is securing the support of commonwealth governments for projects and activities that are important to residents. Our success in this respect is in no small part thanks to the fact that the City is bounded by one federal electorate. Dividing the City will disrupt the City's work and engagement with governments. That is undesirable outcome that should be avoided, especially if a less disruptive alternative is available.

Likewise, as a lifelong resident of St Kilda and a passionate member of our local community and City, it is clear to me that a community of interests exists between St Kilda, Elwood, Balaclava, Elsternwick, Ripponlea and Caulfield. The residents of these areas gather in the same shopping strips, and share means of travel and communication in the form of strong transport links running east-west. These residents have a shared sense of identity. The community gathers on both sides of Hotham Street, and so Hotham Street is not an appropriate or natural place to divide two electorates.

Finally, as a member of the Jewish community, I would like to comment on how, if the boundaries sat at Hotham Street, the Jewish community will be divided. The Jewish community has over many decades shaped the character of the local area, all the way from Caulfield and Elsternwick to Elwood and St Kilda. It is so plainly a community with very important shared interests. The community should not be divided. That will significantly hamper its ability to speak with one voice, speak powerfully, and deliver on the complex interests that bind together its membership.

It makes most sense to return to the 2016 boundaries of Macnamara / Melbourne Ports. The communities on the southern side of Dandenong Road in the Cities of Glen Eira and Port Phillip are genuinely quite distinct to those on its northern side in Stonnington, when assessed by communities of interests, means of communication and travel. Those differences should be reflected in the boundaries of Higgins and Macnamara.

I strongly encourage the Committee to reconsider its proposal.

Yours

Dick Gross

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Australian Electoral Commission

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DICK GROSS AM



April 30, 2021

Dear Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a comment on the objections. My name is Dick Gross. For many years since 1996 I have held a number of roles in the City of Port Phillip as Councillor, Deputy Mayor and Mayor (with my most recent term finishing in 2019).

I think that the Committee's proposal to move parts of St Kilda East, Elsternwick, Balaclava and Ripponlea into Higgins is highly undesirable for a number of reasons. The objectors are right to point out that this proposal divides the City of Port Phillip across two federal electorates. As far as I can recall, the City of Port Phillip has always been contained in Macnamara or Melbourne Ports. The City no doubt represents a community of interest. A significant part of the City's role is securing the support of commonwealth governments for projects and activities that are important to residents. Our success in this respect is in no small part thanks to the fact that the City is bounded by one federal electorate. Dividing the City will disrupt the City's work and engagement with governments. That is most undesirable, especially if a less disruptive alternative is available to the AEC.

Likewise, as a lifelong resident of St Kilda and a passionate member of our local community and City, it is clear to me that a community of interests exists between St Kilda, Elwood, Balaclava, Elsternwick, Ripponlea and Caulfield. The residents of these areas gather in the same shopping strips and share means of travel and communication in the form of strong transport links running east-west. These residents have a shared sense of identity. The community congregates on both sides of Hotham Street, and so Hotham Street is not an appropriate or natural place to divide two electorates.

Finally, as a member of the Jewish community, if the boundaries sat at Hotham Street, the Jewish community will be divided. The Jewish community has over many decades shaped the character of the local area, all the way from Elwood to St Kilda. It is so plainly a community with very important shared interests. The community should not be divided. That will significantly hamper its ability to speak with one voice and deliver on the complex interests that unite its membership.

It makes most sense for Macnamara to return to the 2016 boundaries of Melbourne Ports, before Windsor was inserted. That would involve moving Windsor back to Higgins. The communities on the southern side of Dandenong Road in the Cities of Glen Eira and Port Phillip are genuinely quite different to those on its northern side in Stonnington, when assessed by communities of interests, means of communication and travel. Those differences should be reflected in the boundaries of Higgins and Macnamara.

I strongly encourage the Committee to reconsider its proposal.

Yours sincerely



Dick Gross