



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Comment on suggestion 51

Kylea Tink MP

7 pages



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Redistribution Committee for New South Wales
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Dear Committee

Comments on suggestions relevant to the Division of North Sydney

I have prepared these comments on the suggestions relating to the New South Wales federal redistribution. As with my original suggestion, dated 24 October 2023, I have focussed my comments on the Division of North Sydney.

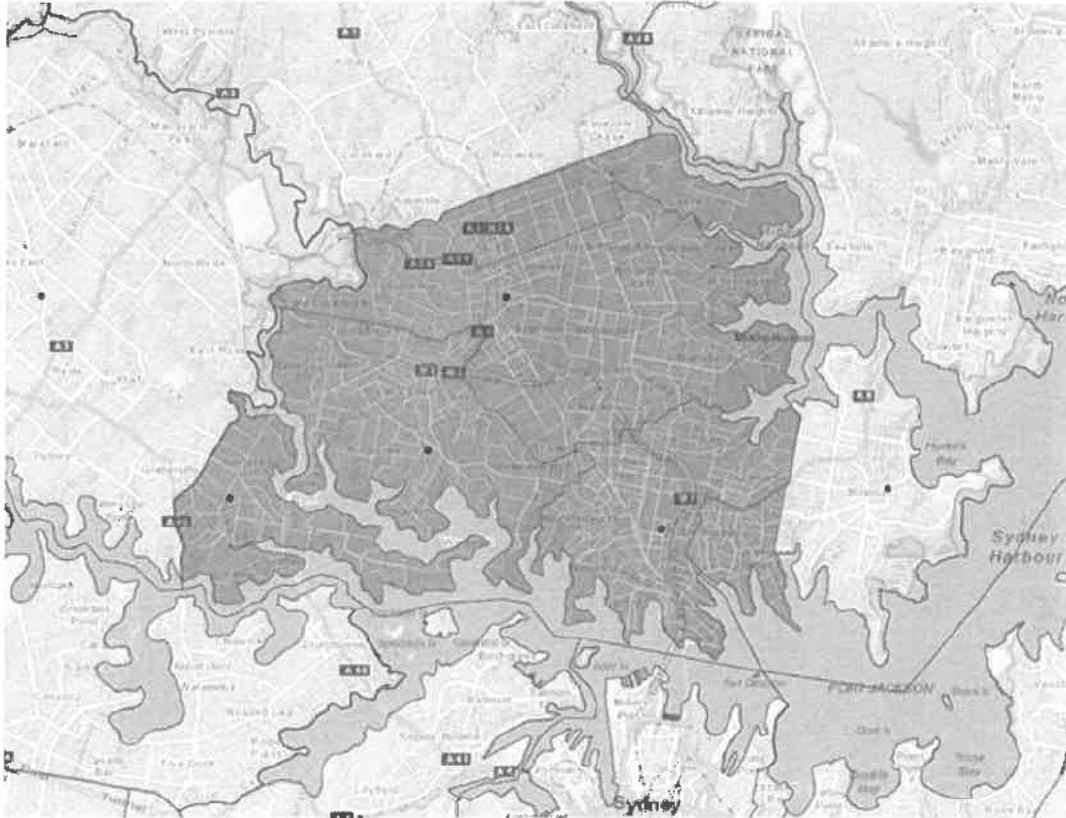
Based on community feedback, the *strongly preferred option of the North Sydney community remains that the seat of North Sydney is retained*, and the required number of electors are brought into the electorate by extending its boundaries to the north and to the east. For the move north, the Division should absorb the balance of Willoughby Local Government Area ('LGA') and for the move east absorb the balance of North Sydney LGA, whilst the other boundaries within the Division are retained.

The effect of this simple and minimalist adjustment would be to see the projected number of electors increase by 20,271 electors, easily satisfying the enrolment requirement for both 2025 and 2028 elections.

My initial submission also passes four major tests:

- Retains the overwhelming majority of the electorate within major topographical boundaries – inside Middle Harbour and around the Lane Cove River;
- Preserves the North Sydney – Chatswood heavy rail / metro / employment and high-density residential corridor as the community of interest forming an economic and demographic spine of the electorate;
- Accommodates actual population growth and significant densification along the metro route at St Leonards, Crows Nest and North Sydney, and
- Proposes minimalist changes that incorporate new areas which already enjoy a strong community of interest with the existing electorate.

The seat could be redrawn in this manner:



In these comments on suggestions, I am also expressing serious reservations about the accuracy of the dataset upon which boundary adjustments are predicated as these appear to be manifestly at odds with the reality of densification occurring in North Sydney.

The fundamental principle of these comments and my additional suggestion which is made in response to other submissions is the retention and extension of the very powerful economic, residential, social, recreational and administrative community of interest that exists in North Sydney along the North Shore heavy rail and soon to be completed Metro rail corridors.

Extending from Milsons Point at the southern extremity of the electorate and proceeding through its northern boundary to Roseville, Gordon, Pymble, Turramurra and beyond this transport corridor is the true spine of the electorate. Residential density, school catchments, sporting groups, employment hubs (North Sydney, Crows Nest, Artarmon Industrial Zone, Chatswood) all radiate from it.

Each of the major party submissions propose to cut the electorate into three parts, doing so at our densest points of North Sydney, Crows Nest, St Leonards precincts. This is in defiance of all community of interest tests. The strong desire of the electorate is that North Sydney be extended north along the rail corridor extending the community of interest, not destroying it.

Acknowledging that in addition to the numerical quotas, the Redistribution Committee shall also give due consideration to a number of factors, below, I have outlined the reasons why each of the alternate suggestions for North Sydney do not meet these criteria:

- community interests within the proposed electoral division, including economic, social and regional interests;
- means of communication and travel within the proposed electoral division;
- physical features and area of the proposed electoral division; and
- existing boundaries of divisions in the state or territory.

Response to suggestions by the Liberal Party & Ms Zali Steggall OAM MP

While the NSW Liberal Party submission retains the name 'North Sydney', recognising it is a Federation Seat, it is in name only. The practical effect of the suggestion is to abolish the Division. The Liberal's submission carves up the Division between Bennelong, Bradfield and Warringah.

Ms Steggall's submission contains two options for westward expansion into North Sydney: option A - proposes a new boundary at the Warringah freeway, and option B - extends well beyond the freeway, seeing the western boundary end in Waverton.

All three of those proposals – the Liberals one and Ms Steggall's two – would result in a deeply bifurcated electorate with a little or no overarching community of interest between coastal precincts and one of Sydney's identified priority residential growth zones¹. As I indicated in my initial submission, Warringah already has three discrete areas: Mosman, the beaches and the suburbs around Forestville. Neither the beaches, nor the Forestville area, share any features with the densely populated areas around North Sydney's CBD, Crows Nest or the lower north shore.

The Liberals' and Ms Steggall's proposals fail each of the Redistribution Committee's considerations in the following ways:

- *community interests* - there is an insufficient community of interest between the northern suburbs or Forestville or Allambie Heights in (depending on which submission is being considered) and Dee Why and the southern part of the suggested boundaries of Waverton or Crows Nest in the south. These suburbs do not share density profiles, local sporting teams, school catchments, places of worship, shopping centre hubs or other social infrastructure generally designed around an LGA.
- *means of communication and travel* - there are no shared newspapers, local Facebook community groups or public transport hubs. For example, from Dee Why in the north to the city commuters use the Warringah Freeway, not passing through North Sydney. Residents in the lower north shore around Waverton and North Sydney would generally commute to the city via train. There is no cross-over between these three distinct places.

- *physical features* - there is the major physical geographic divide separating the three areas, with the Forestville / Allambie Heights area separated from the lower north shore via Middle Harbour.
- *existing boundaries* – these proposals represent substantial changes to all existing north shore seat boundaries.

Response to suggestions by the Labor Party

Labor's suggestion would change North Sydney from a lower north shore seat based around the northern Sydney rail corridor to an amalgam of suburbs extending as far west as Ermington. The proposal seeks to move roughly 30% of Bennelong into North Sydney and see North Sydney lose its historical centre of North Sydney LGA and North Sydney CBD. The Labor proposal acknowledges the seat may even need to change its name because of this radical redrawing.

If Labor's submission was adopted, the Division of North Sydney's move west would see it pick up suburbs and LGAs - Ryde and Ku-Ring-Gai - which have never previously been part of it.

The Labor Party proposal fails each of the Redistribution Committee's considerations in the following ways:

- *community interests* - If Labor's proposal was adopted it would see a Division which included the western harbourside suburbs of Tennyson and Putney in the same electorate as the north shore suburbs of Roseville and East Lindfield. These areas have little in common: no shared local sporting teams, school catchments or shopping precincts, with electors around Gladesville, North Ryde and Putney, for example, using Top Ryde shopping centre, while the electors of East Lindfield and Roseville inevitably using Chatswood.
- *means of communication and travel* - there are no shared newspapers, local Facebook groups or public transport hubs across the proposed Division. Commuters from the harbour suburbs of Tennyson and Putney and around North Ryde, if they were travelling to the city would do so by buses from the Ryde depot via Victoria Road, south of the harbour, or perhaps via train on the northern line, while people travelling from East Lindfield or Roseville would travel by bus via the Warringah Expressway or train on the north shore train line. In other words, there is no overlap between these two distinct areas.
- *physical features* - and the eastern and western halves of the electorate are split by the Lane Cove River. The redrawing would also split the consistency of representation of the northern business districts with the North Sydney and Chatswood CBD split from that of St Leonards.
- *existing boundaries* - Labor's proposal is a radical redrawing of the current boundaries, which would see 30% of Bennelong moving into North Sydney and North Sydney losing both the area around North Sydney CBD which gives the seat its name and business focus.

Response to suggestions by the National Party

Like the Liberals, the Nationals have proposed abolishing North Sydney, with Bennelong reverting to the boundaries it had prior to the 21st century, but moving even further east than ever before. I make the same observations about this proposal as I have with Labor's suggestion.

An alternative proposal for North Sydney

While my initial proposal, outlined above and in my original submission, remains North Sydney's preferred option, I do recognise that the north shore may reduce its overall number of Divisions. I reiterate that this loss should not be the Division of North Sydney. In order to facilitate this outcome and after considering the other submissions, I put forward this alternative for North Sydney:

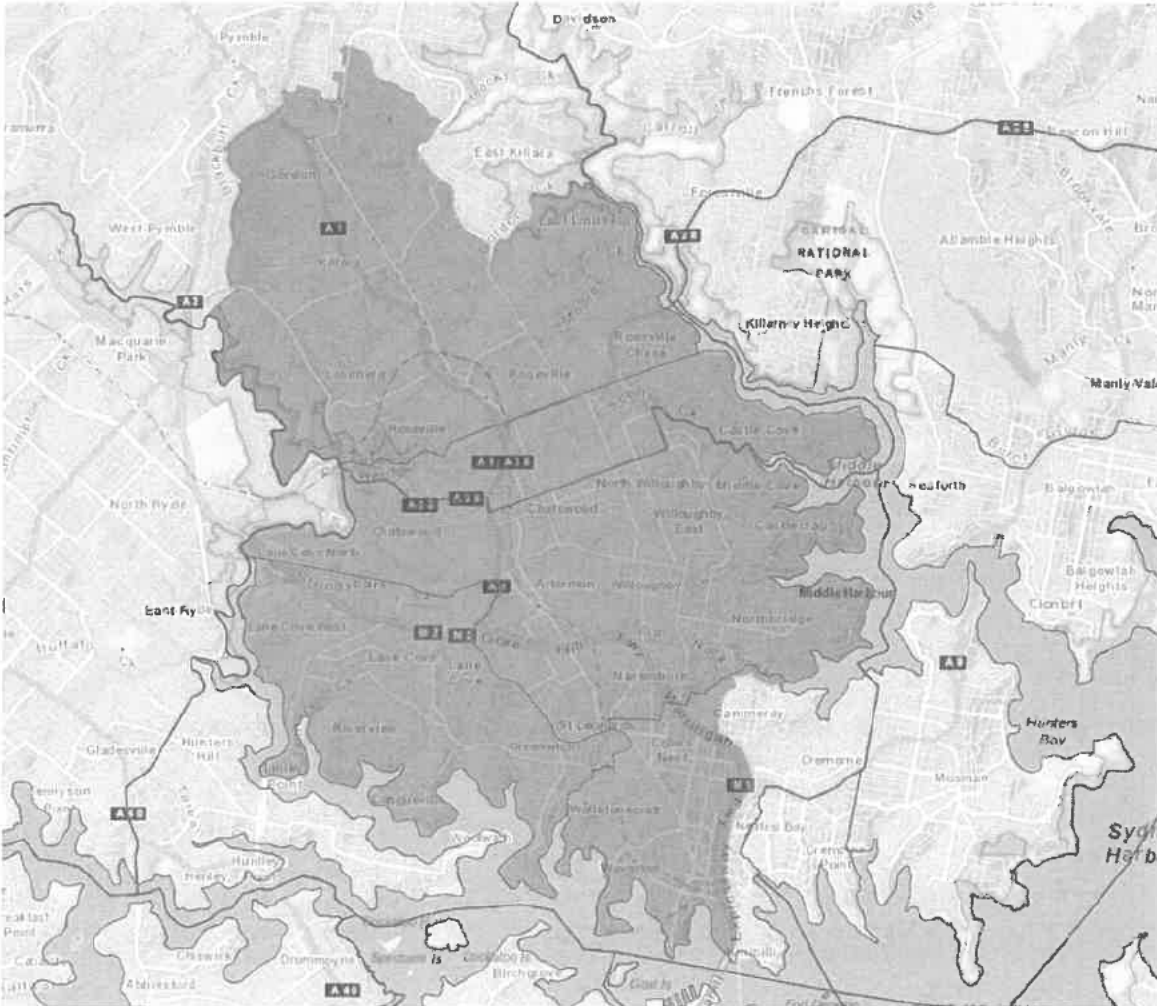
- Accepting Ms Stegall's option A (which loses the least amount of North Sydney LGA, but would also mean the boundary with Mackellar which change only marginally);
- Accepting the Liberals' suggestion of moving Hunters Hill LGA into Bennelong;
- Accepting the Greens proposal to abolish Bradfield and move the balance of Willoughby Council into North Sydney, as previously suggested, and as much of Ku-Ring-Gai LGA as required, following the train line north.
- Berowra, heavily below expected enrolments, could pick up the balance of Bradfield and become an upper north shore seat, with a hub around Hornsby.

This would result in the following elector numbers:

Actual enrolment	125, 955
Enrolment goal	121, 011
Difference (within +/-10%)	9, 944 (4.09%)
Projected enrolment	125,760
Projected enrolment goal	129,621
Projected difference (within +/-3.5%)	3, 861 (-2.98%)

The advantage of these redrawn boundaries is that it not only picks up the balance of Willoughby LGA but it follows the north shore rail line, which is the spine of the north shore, strengthening the strong community of interest which already exists along it and which both Divisions of North Sydney and Bradfield benefit from. It also creates a distinct "north shore seat", maintaining its southern point at the harbour and travelling north.

The seat could be redrawn in this manner:



Projections & why North Sydney should not be abolished

Finally, I would like to start by adding my voice to those – including the National Party and the Hon Malcolm Turnbull – who query the Australian Bureau of Statistics' modelling when it comes to projected enrolments. While I accept the AEC cannot base its decisions on anecdotal evidence, the projections for several suburbs in North Sydney simply do not appear to reflect the actual reality of what is happening on the ground in our community.

The ABS data indicates a decrease in electors in the suburbs of Crows Nest, Greenwich and St Leonards, which currently sit at the heart of the North Sydney electorate.

Consistent with this, the Liberal party submission expressly states at top of page 20 that the north shore of Sydney has "very low or no growth." Regarding the North Sydney electorate, this is completely incorrect as it is fundamentally at odds with the forecast population and housing growth of North Sydney, Willoughby and Lane Cove Councils, as well as the NSW Government.

Crows Nest and St Leonards have been identified by the NSW Department of Planning as one of the State's key "growth corridors" due to Crows Nest's new Metro Station, due to open in

2024 which is estimated to lead to 6,680 new homes by 2036ⁱ. This will bring an even greater number of medium and high-density residential precincts in the area. St Leonards station, already a major hub, will grow even faster.

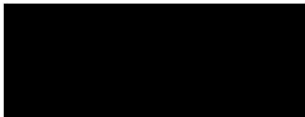
The St Leonards South precinct is a further example, the ABS dataset indicates a forecast of approximately 900 electors for this area in 2028. As this submission is written today there are currently more than 2,000 medium and high-density dwellings under construction in this precinctⁱⁱ. This is just a single example of how planned and in-delivery housing densification brings the dataset into question.

I am acutely aware through my constituents that there is a concern that infrastructure for schools and amenities may be insufficient in this area given the extensive densification occurring in this sector of the electorate.

It is highly likely that come the next redistribution, the area around Crows Nest and St Leonards will be significantly more populated than the ABS data suggests, and any abolition of the Division will be seen to have been imprudent and based on misleading data.

Finally, I note that the Greens have suggested that the electorate of North Sydney be renamed to Cammeraygal. I would welcome a community discussion around this proposal.

Yours sincerely,



Kylea
Independent Member for North Sydney

Tink

MP

ⁱ [Sydney new housing density zones revealed \(smh.com.au\)](https://www.smh.com.au)

ⁱⁱ <https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/plans-for-your-area/priority-growth-areas-and-precincts/st-leonards-and-crows-nest/the-2036-plan>

ⁱⁱⁱ [First look: Developer Anson Group lodges \\$187m plan tallest skyscraper in St Leonards | Daily Telegraph](https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au)