



**THE FEDERAL
REDISTRIBUTION
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Suggestion 12

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2 pages

Submission regarding re-distribution of electoral boundaries on the north shore of Sydney & the renaming of the Division of Mitchell

1. Re-naming of Mitchell

The Division of Mitchell is named after Thomas Mitchell, a European famous for his work as a surveyor of the east coast of Australia in the early 19th century. However, Thomas Mitchell is also recognised as being the leader of a group of explorers involved in the Mount Dispersion massacre of indigenous people on 27 May 1836. The name 'Mount Dispersion' was given by Mitchell to a small hill in region because he and his party 'dispersed' the Indigenous locals who sought to stop the Europeans' movement through the area.

The Monuments Australia website records this account given of the incident in a letter from Thomas Mitchell to NSW Governor Bourke:

"...on the morning of 27 May there were following us closely along the river with tumultuous shouting, and our own safety and further progress evidently depended on our attacking them forthwith. But it was difficult to come at such enemies hovering in our rear with lynx-eyed vigilance of savages. I succeeded however... attacked simultaneously by both parties the whole betook themselves to the river, my men pursuing them and shooting as many as they could, numbers were shot swimming across the Murray, and some ever after they had reached the opposite shore as they descended they bank. Thus is in a short time the usual silence of the desert prevailed on the banks of the Murray, and we pursued our journey unmolested."

At least seven indigenous people were killed.

In my view, the seat of Mitchell should be renamed – ideally to a name recognising the local indigenous group from that part of Sydney – and not continue to recognise a man who took part in the killing of our country's first nations peoples.

2. Divisions on the north shore of Sydney

Based on the data released by the electoral commission on 9 August 2023, the north shore and northern beaches of Sydney have one seat too many. It is suggested that Bradfield be abolished and divided between Berowra, Mackellar, Warringah and North Sydney.

My proposal is as follows:

Hunters Hill Council be moved out of the Division of North Sydney and returned to Bennelong, where it was until the late 1990s. There is a much stronger community of interest between Hunters Hill Council and Bennelong than Hunters Hill and North Sydney, for instance (in no particular order):

- ❖ the two public high schools in Hunters Hill Council, Hunters Hill High School and Riverside High School, have catchments which are largely in Bennelong, not North Sydney.

- ❖ the local sports teams which are used by people in Hunters Hill Council, such as Ravens Netball, All Saints Soccer, Ryde rugby league, Hunters Hill rugby, Gladesville RSL gymnastics and Pirates Cricket, have members from Hunters Hill Council and Ryde Council.
- ❖ Residents of Hunters Hill Council and residents of Bennelong use the same public transport to get into the city.
- ❖ residents of Bennelong, like the residents of Hunters Hill, use the main shopping hubs of Gladesville and Top Ryde.
- ❖ There is also an obvious demarcation between the Hunters Hill Council area and the balance of the North Sydney electorate, being the Lane Cove River.

The movement of Hunters Hill Council into Bennelong would increase Bennelong's electors by about 7,500 people. This would give Bennelong about 124,000 electors.

Bennelong could pick up an extra 6,000 electors from Parramatta Council, noting Bennelong already takes in Ermington, which is part of Parramatta Council. This would mean Bennelong represents three Councils – Ryde, Hunters Hill and Parramatta. This would also ease the burden on the North Sydney member who must currently represent four councils: North Sydney Council (in part), Willoughby (in part), Lane Cove and Hunters Hill.

Obviously, if Hunters Hill Council was lost to Bennelong, this would cause the already below enrolment North Sydney with even fewer electors: 112,112 reduced to about 104,700. It is suggested that:

North Sydney move north to pick up the balance of Willoughby Council from Bradfield (completing the suburb of Chatswood to Boundary Road and including Castle Cove) in the north and picking up the balance of North Sydney Council (Neutral Bay) from Warringah in the east.

The combination of those two simple movements north and east also maximises the community of interest for the Division of North Sydney including the balance of council areas the Division already represents and which share transport, shopping and business hubs.

The Division of Warringah's current under enrolment is not served by moving west into North Sydney. There is simply no community of interest between Warringah's areas around Allambie Heights, Brookvale and Manly and the lower north shore around Kirribilli and Cremorne. There is also the significant geographical divide of middle harbour, which already creates a division of the community of interest between Mosman Council and the northern beaches – these areas simply have nothing in common.

Warringah is a northern beaches seat which is best served by moving north into Mackellar to pick up Forestville, Frenchs Forest and Davidson, then suburbs to the east of the Pacific Highway such as Roseville Chase, Roseville, East Lindfield and East Killara.

Mackellar would move west into Bradfield, picking up all suburbs east of the Pacific Highway such as North Turramurra, St Ives Chase, St Ives Pymble and Gordon. Berowa, also heavily below expected enrolments, could pick up the balance of Bradfield.

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