



Objection 467

Coburg Football Club

2 pages

Dear Redistribution Committee,

Coburg Football Club - member of the VFL, a national competition, welcomes the opportunity to provide you with an opposition to the proposed redistribution of Wills.

Coburg Football Club would like to oppose the removal of parts of Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy from Wills.

This objection is written in our capacity as the Coburg Football Club, based at Harding Street, Coburg, and focused on the proposed redistribution of Wills.

It is our view that the proposal to divide Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy from Wills and add Fitzroy North, Carlton North and Princess Hill is problematic, against the 'communities of interest' 'means of travel and communication' considerations.

It is our view that the proposed redistribution does not wholly take into account these two considerations.

Our club proudly represents the North/Western corridor of Melbourne nationally, with strong attachments to large parts of the areas that will split with Wills in this proposal.

Members of our club live in, and are part of communities in Glenroy, Oak Park, Pascoe Vale South and Brunswick West. These communities are similar, not just because they play football or aspire to play football at Coburg, but because they share the same socio-economic and socio-political experiences. One of these indicators is the fact that all are connected to our club in spirit and in difficulties that our club and the current bodies are working together to improve. We feel it's necessary to continue in this arrangement and not risk the stability and partnerships already established.

The Coburg Football Community has long benefited greatly from sharing a local council (Merri-Bek), Federal Electorate (Wills) and local services and clubs (such as ours). In particular, the suburbs in the north of Wills (Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy) often have their specific socio-economic and cultural needs neglected by public bodies that our club is in and the people we are attempting to engage in supporting.

Splitting these suburbs in half, by effectively putting an electoral boundary through them, will carve up these communities and cut through the very heart of the community. The new Pascoe Vale road border being proposed by the Redistribution Committee is not a divider, it is the spine of the community that we represent at the Coburg Football Club. Communities on either side of this road are shared and similar, by contrast it is the current and natural Moonee Ponds creek border that properly separates communities.

The shared socio-economic, linguistic, cultural and geographic realities of communities in Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy are indicative of a community of interest. This is very different to communities in Maribyrnong such as Essendon and Aberfeldie.

Our community catchment - our schools, support and football focus incorporates these areas, and we are forging outstanding partnerships under the current arrangements

Additionally, the communities in Fitzroy North, Carlton North and Princes Hill are separated by the well-recognised boundary of Brunswick Road. This border separates those suburbs into different councils, but is also indicative of different socio-economic, cultural and linguistic realities of residents there. As a football club, the services and community-led initiatives we provide are tailored to the shared communities in Glenroy, Oak Park, Pascoe vale south and Brunswick West, rather than for the different communities of in Fitzroy North, Carlton North

and Princes Hill. There is a distinction between the two sides of Brunswick Road which we see through our work with the community.

The proposed redistribution also adds two additional Councils – Melbourne City Council and Yarra Council to Wills, and removes suburbs that are in the city of Merri-Bek and puts them into the division of Maribyrnong. Wills is unique in that the majority of the electorate is also in Merri-Bek, and this is indicative of publicly recognised community boundaries. Moving these Merri-Bek/Wills suburbs Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy also has manifest consequences – members of our club would have their communities divided along electoral boundaries while trying to access the same local government services, and our Football Club initiatives.

Merri-Bek council also has its own formed identity – shaped by its services – that is distinct from the Melbourne City Council and Yarra Council. People in Merri-Bek, particularly Glenroy, Pascoe Vale South, Oak Park share Sydney Road, our football ground, retail outlets. Residents in these suburbs do not go to Essendon to grocery shop or buy dinner, nor do they go to retail and shopping outlets in Fitzroy North, Carlton North or Princes Hill.

For these reasons the Coburg Football club request that the Committee re-examines its proposed redistribution of Wills, and implements a different redistribution that collects in one electorate as far as possible the suburbs of Oak Park, Pascoe Vale, Brunswick West and Glenroy and excludes Fitzroy North, Carlton North and Princes Hill

This, rather than the proposal, will have due regard to the ‘community of interest’ consideration and accurately reflect the ‘means of travel and communication’ in these areas.

Thank you for your consideration

Yours Sincerely

Nick Byrne

Coburg Football Club