



# Comment on objections 80

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12 pages

## Comment on Objections

### Abolition of Higgins

Most of the objections to the proposed redistribution are about the abolition of the seat of Higgins. I do not support their suggestions that Higgins should not be abolished. Whilst there are many submissions to save Higgins, most have come from a coordinated campaign by both the current MP for Higgins, Michelle Ananda-Rajah and the former member Katie Allen. Both of which have instructed people to lodge objections to the redistribution often under a similar template. Does the AEC want to send a precedent that MP's offices can just spam the AEC with objections to get their proposals changed?

If any other seat were to be abolished, you would also get that member for the seat, running coordinated campaigns to save their seat. In the NSW objection phase I expect to see many submissions about how North Sydney should not be abolished. However, the vast majority of these submissions didn't put forward the case of what seat should be abolished instead of Higgins and what that would look like. You can't just say a seat shouldn't be abolished, you have to outline which seat should be abolished instead and the case for it.

The changes involved in not abolishing Higgins would be substantial and would require nearly all of the redistribution to be done again. This would require another round of public consultation. I'll put forth arguments as to why Higgins is the right seat to abolish and I disagree with the objections to its abolishment.

#### 1. Higgins has a long history

The fact that Higgins has had former treasurers and is the only seat to have had two prime ministers, is an interesting fact, but it is not a valid reason as to why Higgins should not be abolished. The argument for why seats should and shouldn't be abolished should be about which seat are the easiest to abolish and has the smallest flow on effects.

#### 2. Higgins is a fast growing seat

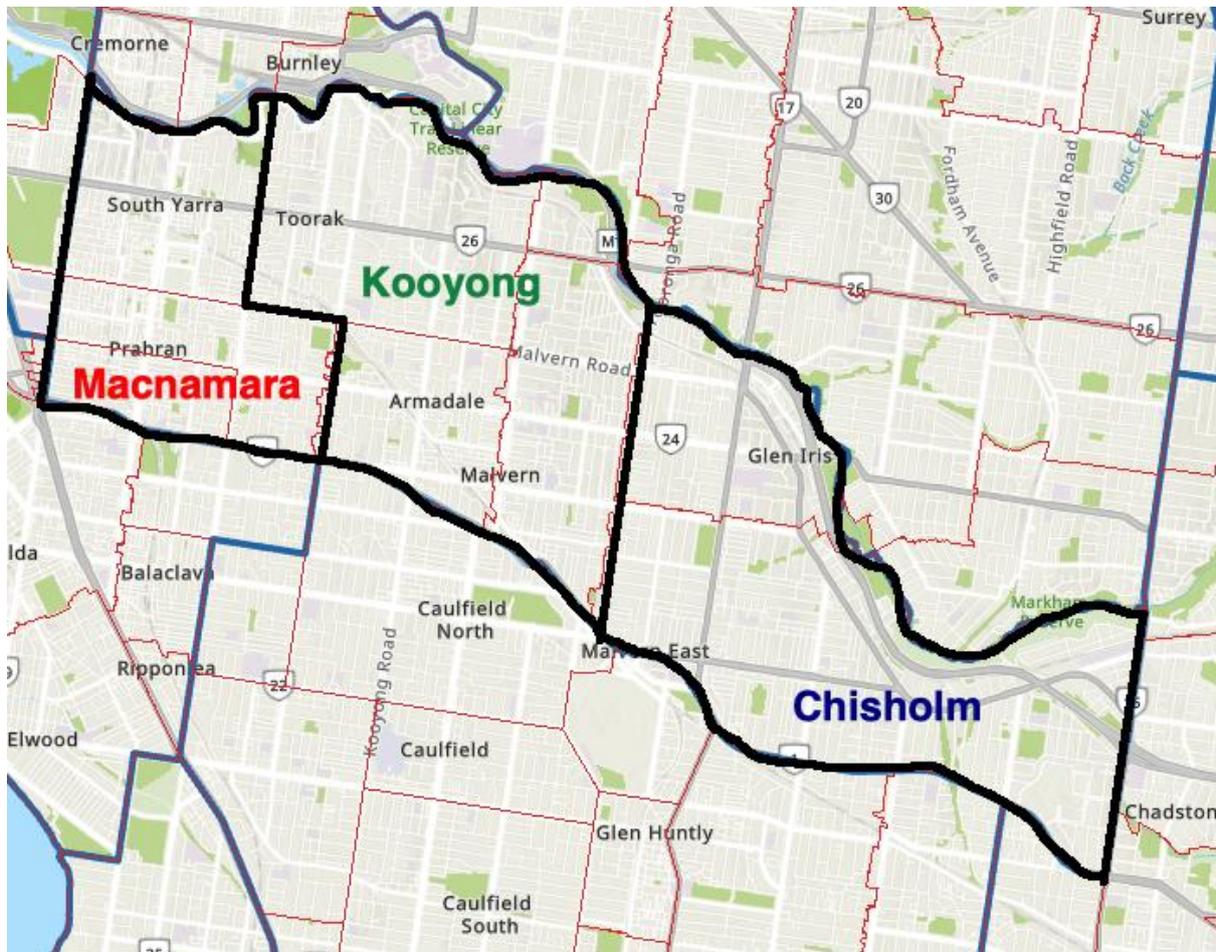
Many submissions noted that Higgins was a fast-growing seat with new apartments being built. Higgins has a growth rate of 6.69% which is below the average for Victoria of 8.85%. Higgins is actually one of the slowest growing seats in Victoria, which makes the case **FOR** it to be abolished.

#### 3. Higgins is a Stonnington based seat

A lot of objections were around how Stonnington council has gone from being entirely within the seat of Higgins, to divided between five different seats. I agree that dividing Stonnington council into so many seats is a bad idea, but that isn't an argument to not abolish Higgins, that's an argument to make a few changes to the

boundaries. With a few small changes the remainder of Malvern East can go into Hotham, and all of the Chapel Street precinct can be put into Macnamara. This would make Stonnington only divided into three seats. Why can't Stonnington be divided into multiple seats? Dandenong council and Glen Eira council could both be contained within a single seat but are both divided into three different seats. Why should Stonnington be any different?

Stonnington is the perfect council to divide up due to the vast differences between the different suburbs. This can be seen clearly by how the council contains both one of the most left-wing suburbs in Windsor and one of the most right-wing suburbs in Toorak. Williams Rd is a very clear divide between the inner-city suburbs in Stonnington council and the more suburban suburbs of Malvern, Toorak and Armadale. In state elections the inner-city areas are in the inner-city seat of Prahran, a safe Green seat, and the other areas are in the safest Liberal seat in Melbourne which is Malvern. These areas could not be further apart culturally. The people in South Yarra/Prahran have far more in common with the people in St Kilda and the people in Toorak and Malvern have more in common with the people in Hawthorn.



*A better way to divide Stonnington council up. Inner city sections sent to Macnamara, rich-elite sections sent to Kooyong, upper-middle class & suburban areas sent to Chisholm*

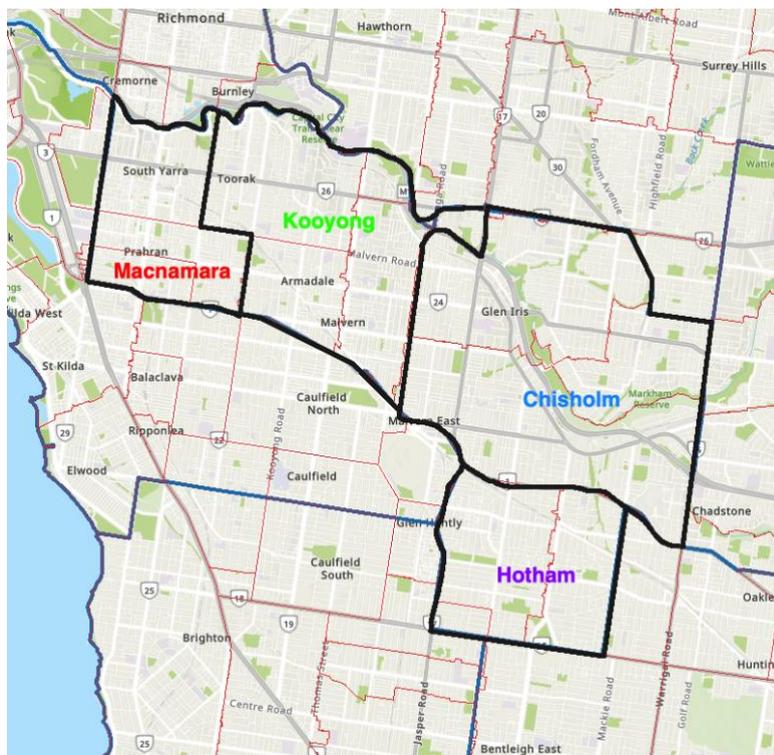
*4. Hotham would be easier to abolish*

A few people have suggested to abolish Hotham instead of Higgins. Whilst on paper Hotham might look like an easy seat to abolish, it is not. If Chisholm drags south to take in sections of Hotham, Menzies and Deakin than end up over quota and you need to have the river crossing between Jagajaga and Menzies. This is less ideal because Manningham council is one of the most diverse councils in Melbourne (53.5% born in Australia) compared with Banyule being one of the least (72.4% born in Aus). There are also much fewer river crossings here. You would also end up with a very stretched north-south Menzies.

In the future Bruce will continue to be dragged east by the growth in La Trobe and Holt (as Bruce is the best seat to absorb their growth) so their will need to be a seat to continue to gain more of Bruce's share of Dandenong council and Hotham is best suited towards it. Hotham has a very logical future as an Oakleigh/Dandenong based seat. If the argument is that Higgins is too important to abolish, why isn't the same said about Hotham when it's the most multicultural seat in Victoria with 56.9% of people born outside Australia? The highest of any seat in Victoria.

### 5. Higgins is the most logical seat to abolish

Like many people, I argued that the seat to cross the Yarra should be Melbourne. There are vast amounts of crossing between Melbourne and Macnamara. Once Melbourne crosses the Yarra, that leaves Macnamara and Higgins at 1.68 quotas without many good options to gain voters. Putting parts of Brighton into a seat with Albert Park and St Kilda would be horrible, putting more of Boroondara into Higgins would force Kooyong to go into Box Hill which would be very bad. Dragging Higgins into Oakleigh would also be bad as would making the seat even more elongated by putting parts of Bentleigh East into it.



Map showing how easily Higgins population can be distributed to neighbouring electorates. Inner city section sent to Macnamara, rich section sent to Kooyong, upper middle-class section sent to Chisholm and more middle class, multicultural areas sent to Hotham

### What to do with Wills & Maribyrnong?

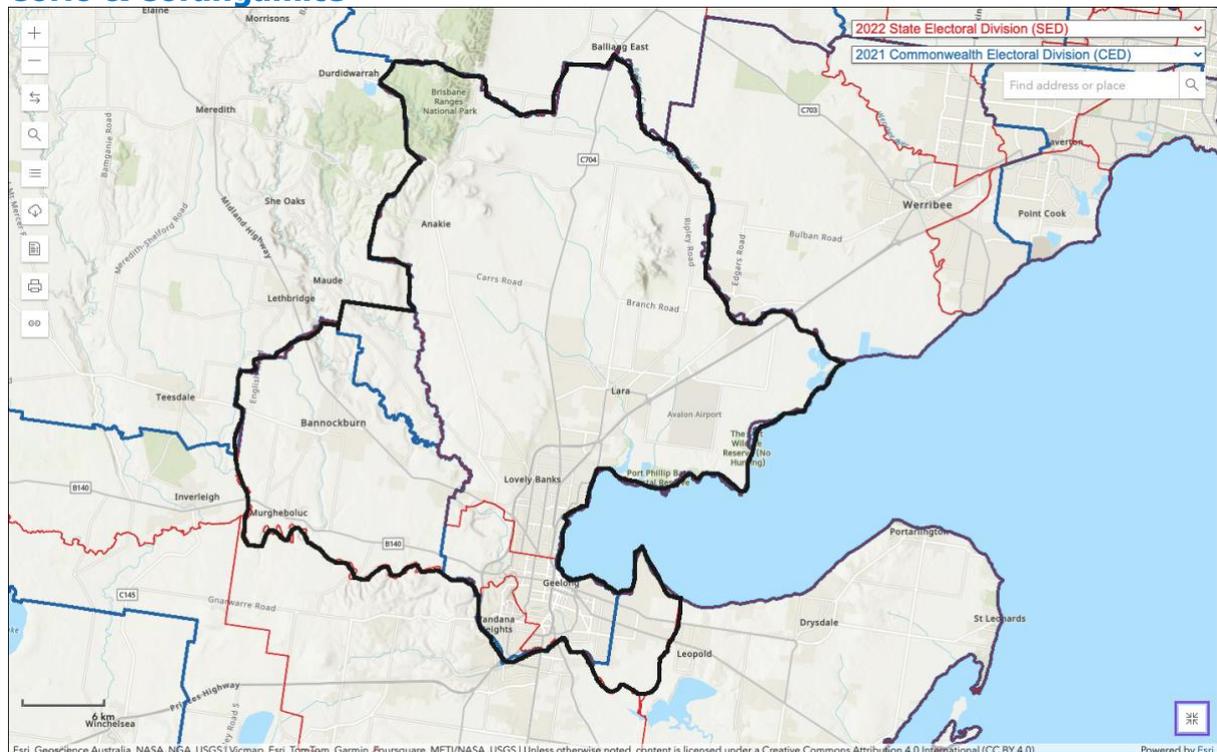
The second highest numbers of objections were about Oak Park being separated from the remainder of Merri-Bek council. It seems a lot of these submissions followed a similar template, but I think there are genuine arguments for it. I do not think the arguments for why Fitzroy North and Carlton North can't be put into Wills are very logical however. Fitzroy North and Carlton North share plenty in common with Brunswick and it would follow the state seat of Brunswick boundaries.

A possible solution to this would be for Park Street to become Wills southern boundaries and then have Cooper gain Fitzroy North. Maribyrnong could then get to quota by gaining Keilor and a small part of Calwell.

### Following State Boundaries

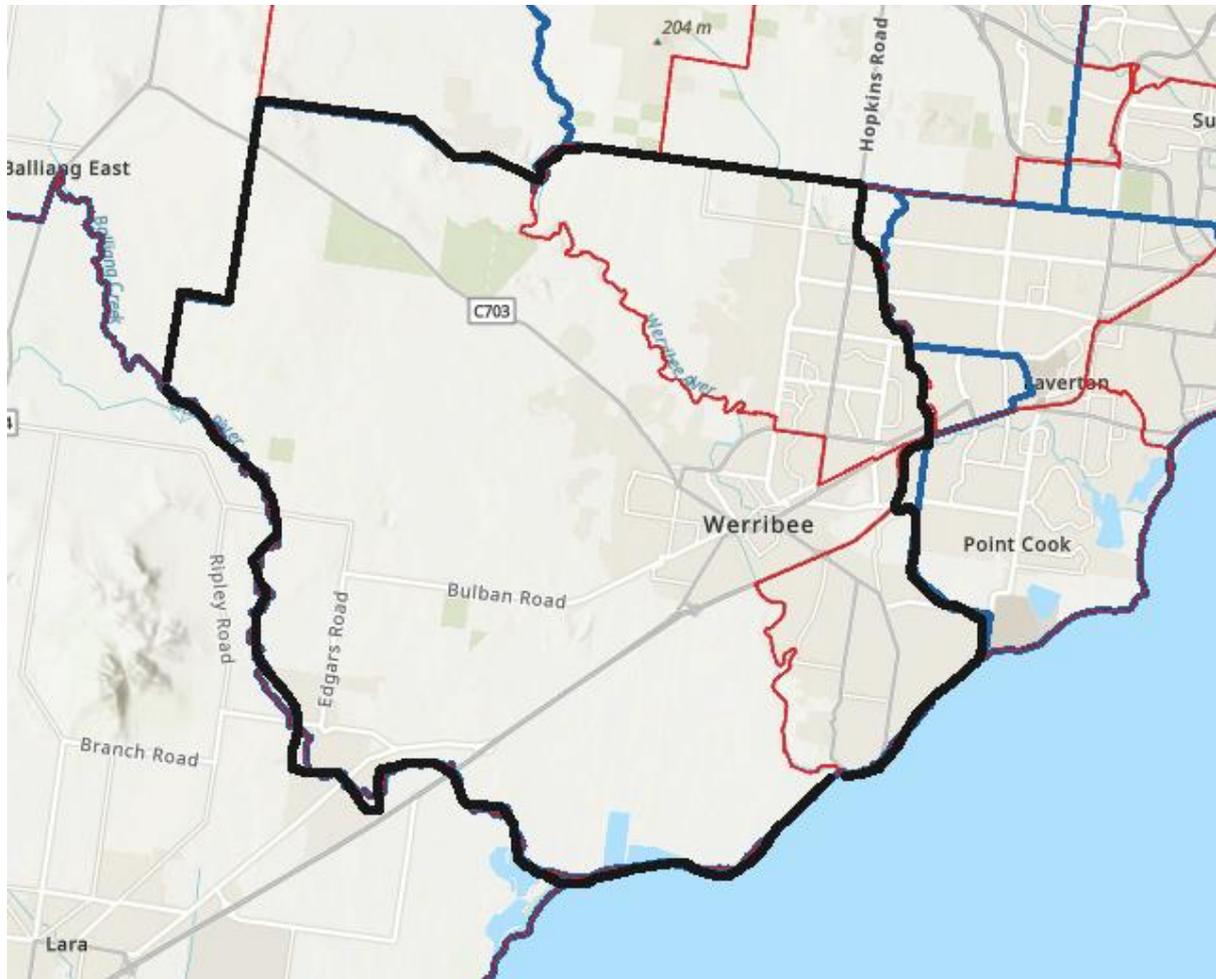
For quite a few difficult boundaries, it would seem the answer may just be to use the state election boundaries. State boundaries provide a clear community of interest, and when a person goes to a federal MP for help, they often will seek advice from their state MPs as well. Aligning the two when possible is something worth considering. The numbers allow for state and fed boundaries to be matched, on a few occasions.

### Corio & Corangamite



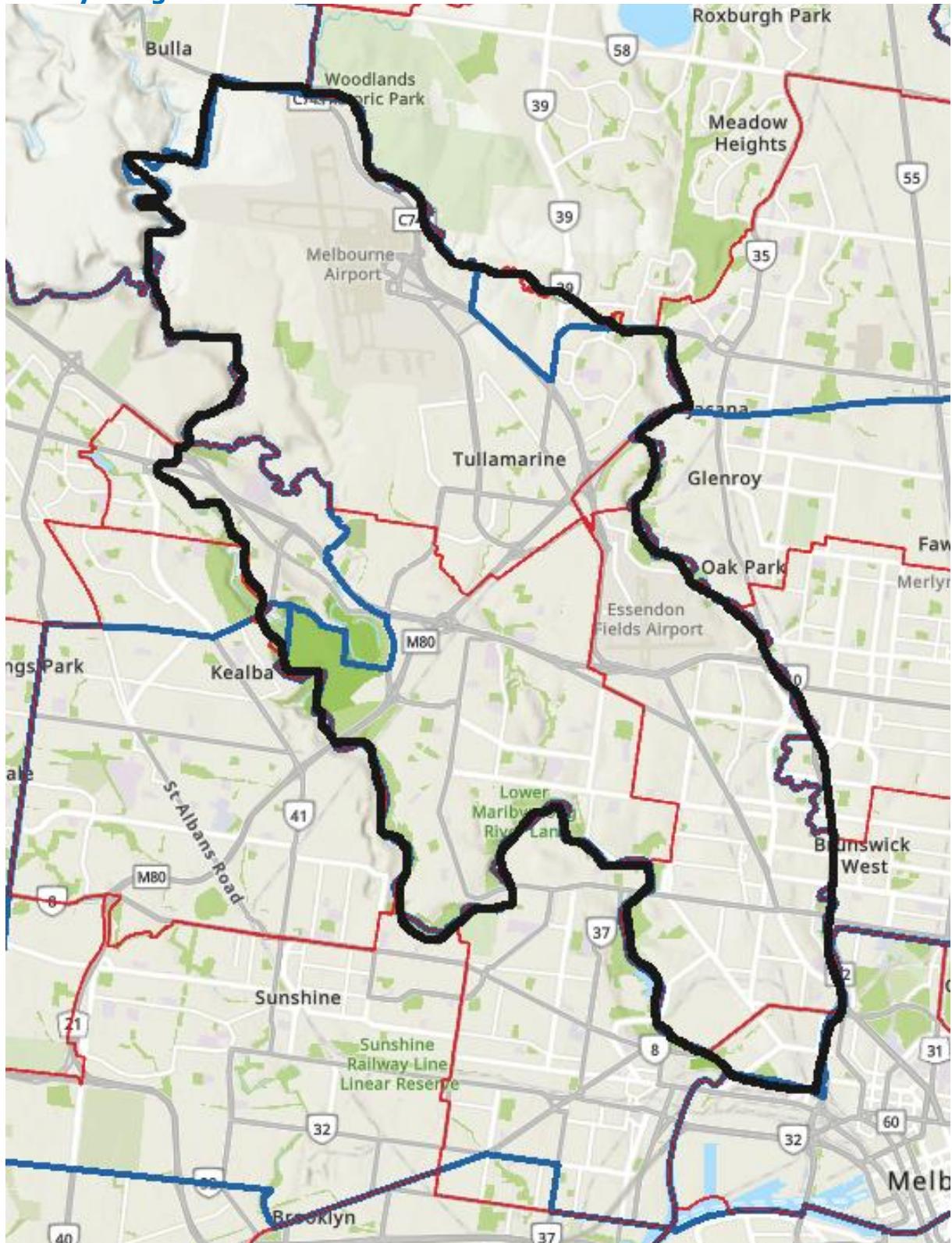
Corio can easily follow the boundary of the state seats of Lara and Geelong.

## Lalor & Gellibrand



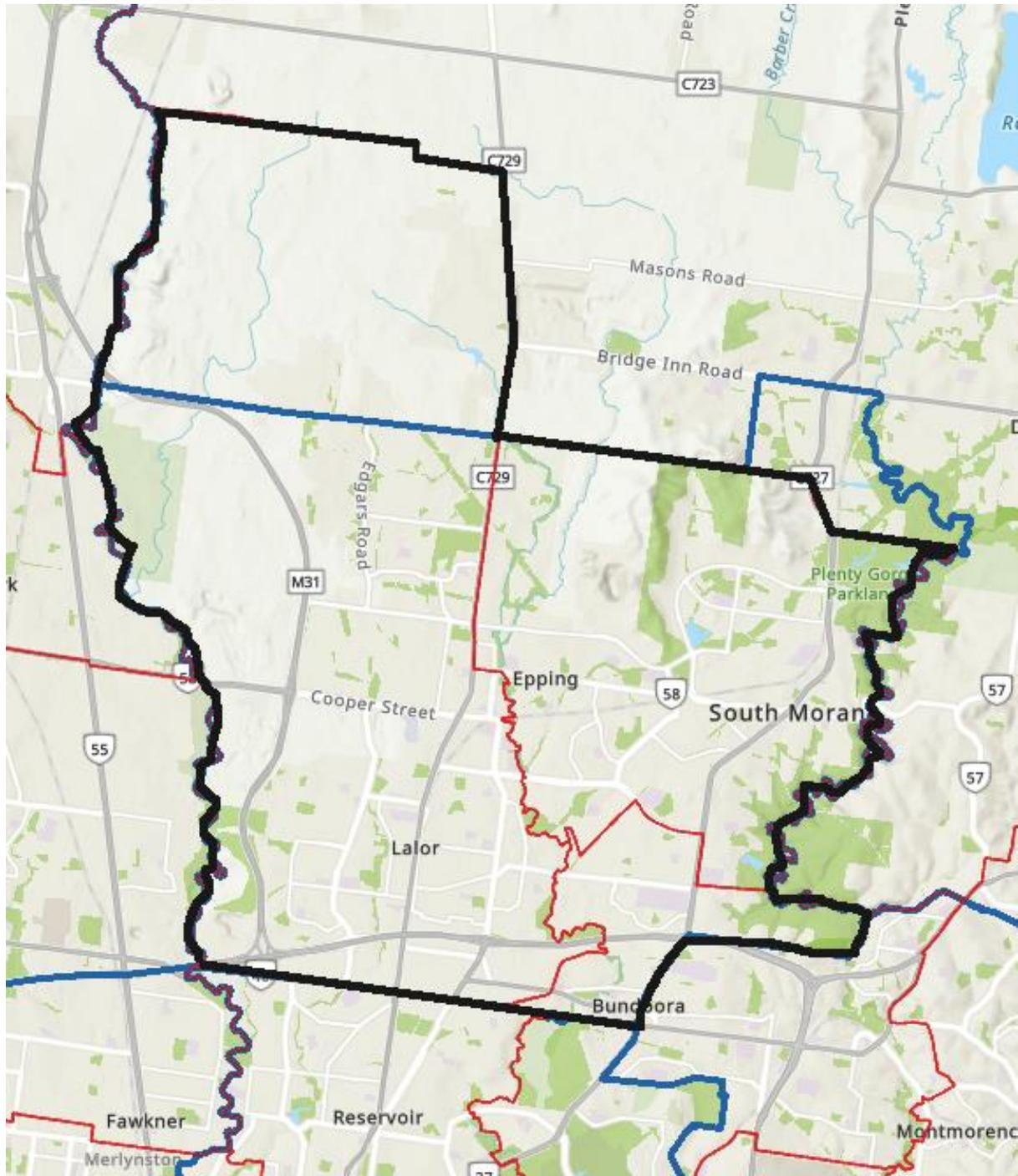
Instead of having Lalor lose electors to Corio and Hawke, it can get to quota by having the Gellibrand and Lalor boundary match the boundary for the state seats of Laverton and Tarneit. This is a far smaller change than breaching the Geelong/Melbourne boundary.

## Maribyrnong and Calwell



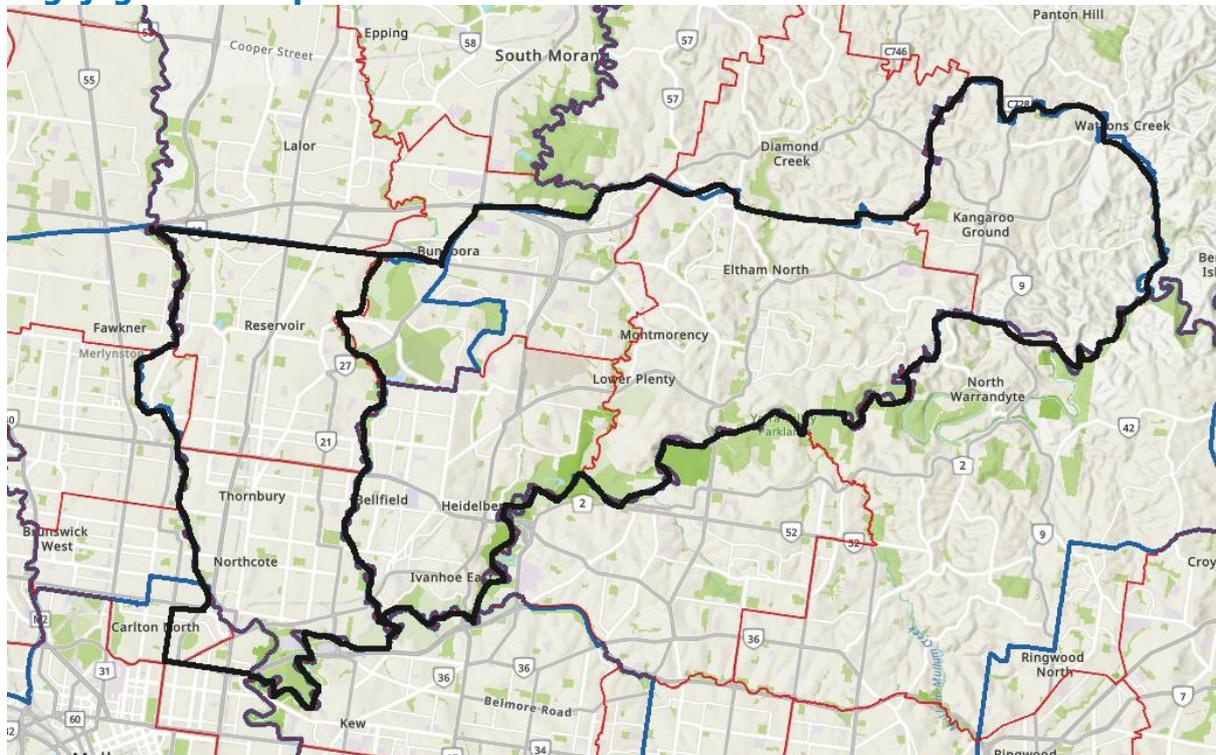
Calwell can get to quota by losing the suburb of Kalkallo to McEwen and then using the state seats of Broadmeadows, Greenvale and Sunbury as the boundaries between Maribyrnong and Calwell. Maribyrnong then just needs to use City Link, Moonee Ponds Creek as its eastern boundaries and Maribyrnong River and Taylor's Creek as its western boundaries.

### Scullin and McEwen



If McEwen loses Kilmore to Nicholls and Woodend to Bendigo (to get both seats to quota), gains the suburb of Kalkallo from Calwell, then aligning the Scullin and McEwen boundaries with the state seats of Thomastown and Mill Park gets both seats to quota.

## Jagajaga and Cooper



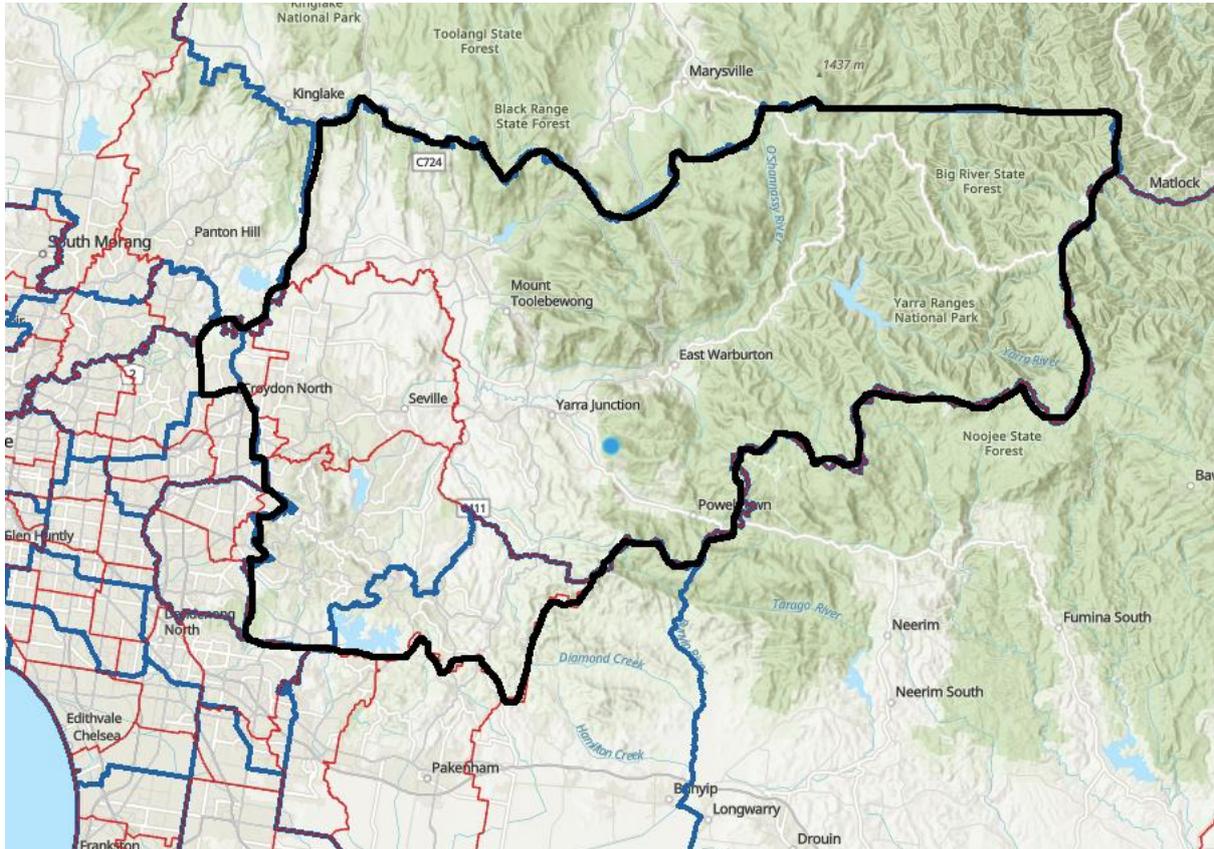
If Cooper gains Fitzroy North, then Cooper is able to follow Darebin Creek as its eastern boundaries. This would align Jagajaga and Cooper's boundaries with the state seats of Ivanhoe and Bundoora.

## Macnamara & Kooyong



Macnamara should gain the remainder of Prahran, aligning it with the state seat of Prahran and Malvern. I also suggest transferring the Southbank and Fisherman's Bend area as this area has more in common with Melbourne. This would make Macnamara based around Albert Park (except a lot of the part within the City of Melbourne), Caulfield and Prahran.

## La Trobe & Casey



Casey can get to quota by aligning its border with the state seat of Monbulk, with the communities of Emerald, Cockatoo and Gembrook fitting well in a rural division. La Trobe would then only need to gain the part of Berwick between Princes Freeway and Princes Highway from Bruce.

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## Dunkley & Flinders

I agree with the submissions to have Dunkley use Patterson River as its northern boundary and for Flinders to gain Pearcedale SA2. These two changes require a far smaller movement of voters and add areas with similar character to each division.

## La Trobe, Casey & Bruce

I agree with submission #504 to have Casey gain the rural parts of Cardinia shire and then have La Trobe gain the same section of Berwick from Bruce. Bruce can then get to quota by gaining the Dandenong – South SA2 from Bruce.

### Changes to East Melbourne

After reading through other people's proposals, I think the easiest way to fix the boundaries in the east are as follows:

**Macnamara:** Gains the remainder of **Prahran**

**Kooyong:** Gains the remainder of **Camberwell** and a small section of **Glen Iris** (west of Burke Rd) and loses **Prahran**

**Goldstein:** Doesn't gain any section of **Bentleigh East**

**Hotham:** Keeps all of **Bentleigh East** and loses **Malvern East**

**Chisholm:** Gains **Malvern East** and loses **Camberwell**

### Changes to South-East Melbourne

After reading through other people's proposals, I think the easiest way to fix the boundaries in the south-east are as follows:

**Isaacs:** Loses **Carrum** and **Patterson Lakes** south of the river and **Dandenong – South SA2**

**Dunkley:** Gains **Carrum** and **Patterson Lakes** south of the river

**Flinders:** Gains **Pearcedale - Tooradin SA2**

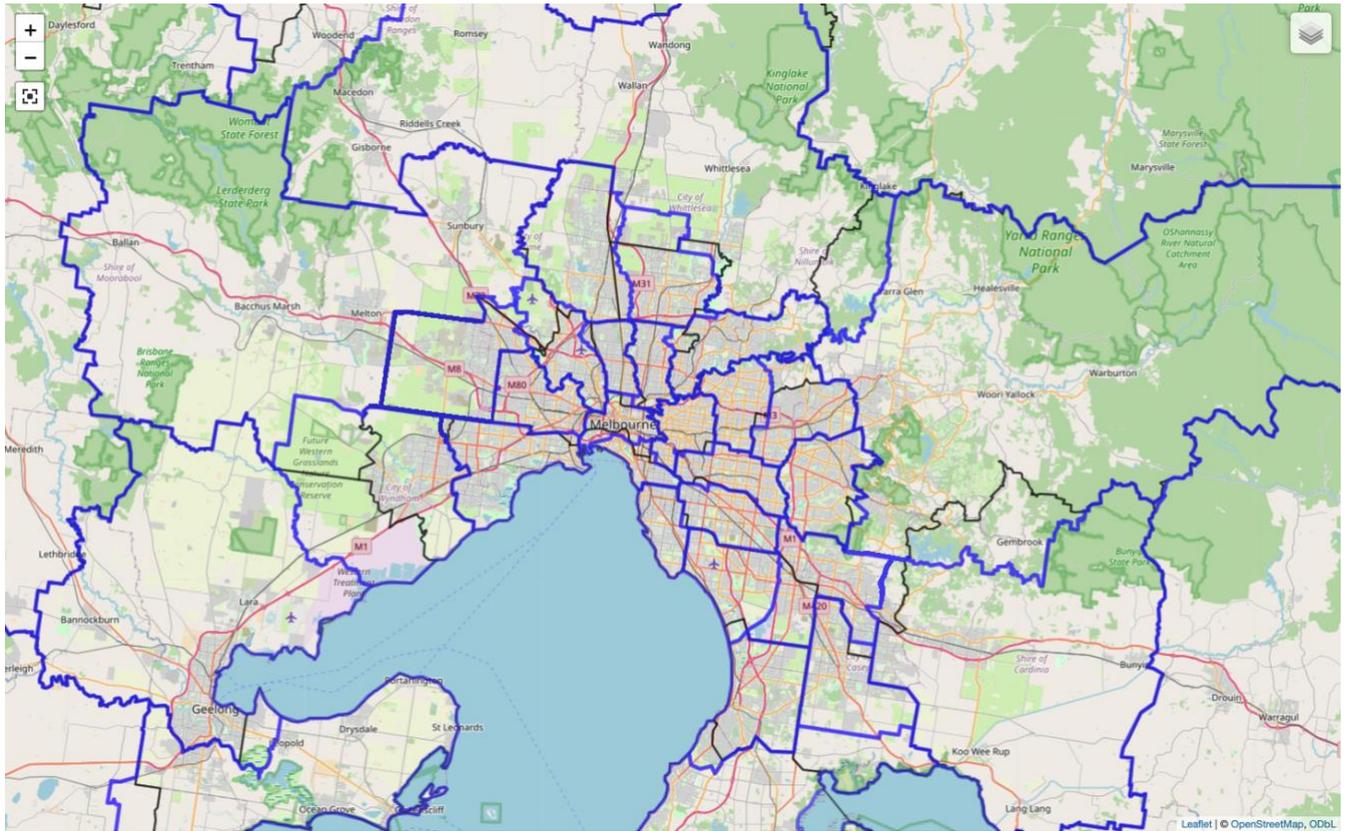
**Holt:** Loses **Pearcedale – Tooradin SA2**

**Bruce:** Gains **Dandenong – South SA2** and loses a section of **Berwick** between Princes Highway and Princes Freeway

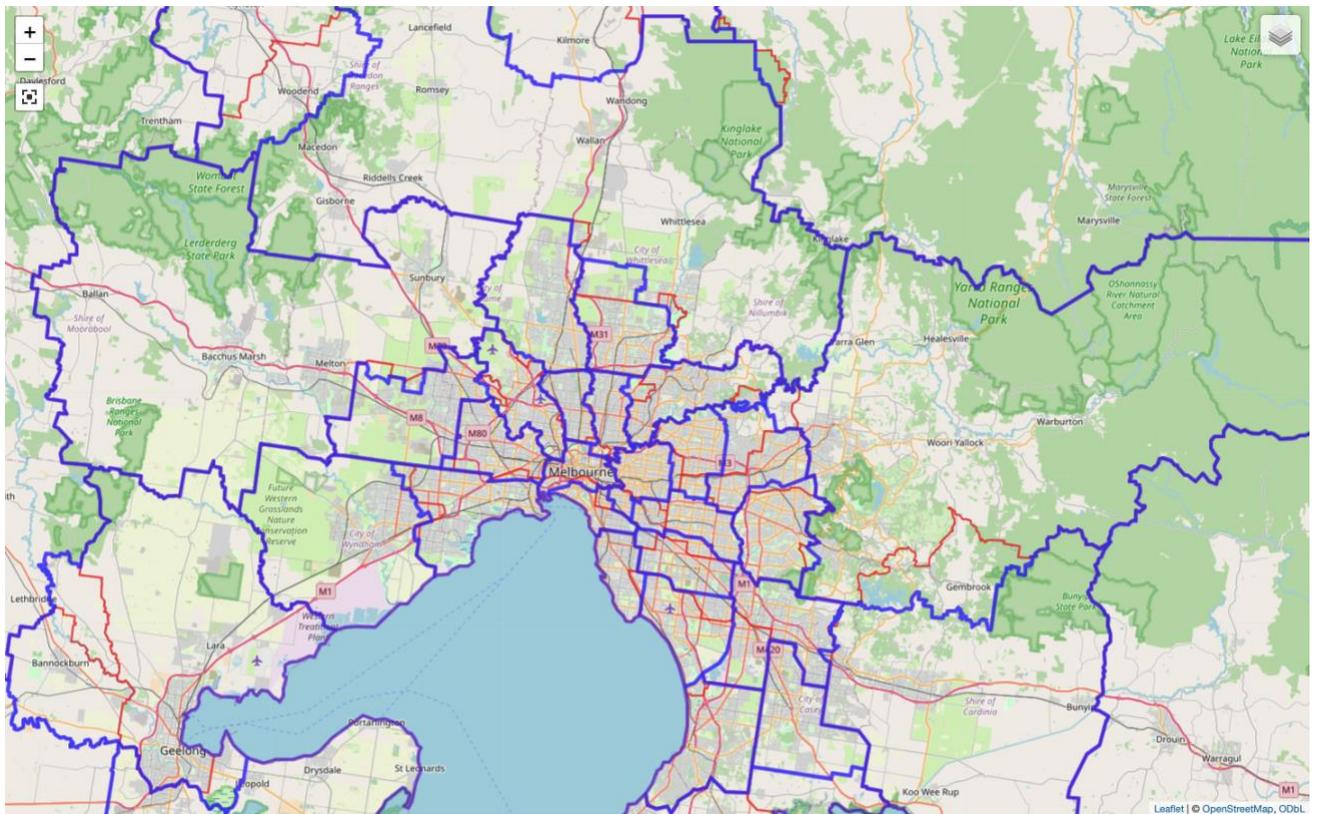
**La Trobe:** Loses the section contained within the state seat of **Monbulk** and gains a section of **Berwick** between Princes Highway and Princes Freeway

**Casey:** Gains the section of the state seat of **Monbulk** currently in La Trobe

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*Map of my proposed redistribution compared to the AEC proposed redistribution*



*Map of my proposed redistribution compared to the current boundaries*

These proposed boundaries would see 361,598 voters moved from one seat to another, which is less than the AEC proposal of 369,249. Not only that but you would get:

- + a far more coherent Melbourne and Macnamara boundary
- + Oak Park stays in Wills
- + Bentleigh East would be entirely within Hotham
- + A very clear boundary between Dunkley and Isaacs
- + Mount Eliza is no longer split
- + Rural parts of La Trobe are now in a rural seat
- + Dandenong is now mostly within Bruce
- + Prahran, Camberwell, Malvern East and Bentleigh East are no longer split
- + Stonnington council is only split into three seats
- + Hepburn council no longer split
- + McEwen follows 'Greater Capital City' boundaries
- + Campbellfield no longer split
- + Nillumbik goes from being split from three seats to two