

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 18 April 2023 12:43 PM
To: Hepburn ERAP Submissions 2023
Subject: Electoral Review submission

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To whom it may concern
This response is on behalf of the residents noted below

names Andrew Robertson, Janice Robertson
address [REDACTED] Trentham
contact [REDACTED]

We have been residents of Trentham since March 2003 and have been involved with several community groups and representations to Council for much of that time.

We believe that models 1 and 2 are more likely to limit the opportunity for representation in our area which is located on the outer edge of the Shire.

We support model 3 of the 3 options which VEC has proposed ie 7 Councillors from 7 Wards. All parts of the Shire would potentially have equal representation.

Model 3 will provide certainty of representation in the area where we reside. This is absolutely critical in a relatively small population area.

Since its formation in the 1990's, and even prior to that, residents of Trentham, and this Ward, have generally felt to have been neglected by Council. With the possibility of NOT being represented, as model 1 would potentially mean, the likelihood of neglect or of being regularly overlooked would only increase.

As residents who have endeavoured over two decades of volunteering to put back into the community, our current frustrations with Council would be in all likelihood be heightened.

As noted above, model 1 could lead to 7 Councillors being elected, but not necessarily any specific representative for our area and we reject that option.

Model 2 increases the cost for Council with the election of one extra Councillor. In the current situation in which Hepburn Shire is only marginally viable, there would not seem to be any benefit for residents to have an additional Councillor.

We also understand that this model potentially creates the risk of a tied vote in Council which places pressure on the Mayor who is elected by the other Councillors rather than the community/voters.

We reject this option.

In relation to naming of our Ward in response to changed boundaries through the creation of 2 additional Wards, we consider that "Coliban" would be appropriate as the Coilban River emanates from our area.

However an alternative name could be "Wisewould" in honour of one of our most revered, generous and loved resident over several decade - Dr Gweneth Wisewould.

Our final comment in relation to this electoral boundary review is that it does not go far enough.

A Shire which is marginally viable, has a staff vacancy level of 20%, an annual staff turnover of 25% and is inherently financially unstable, is one which should be broken up into various constituent parts and merged with other more capable adjoining Councils.

Although this is unlikely for political reasons, it could be the most desirable outcome in the long term.

We trust these comments will be considered by the Panel

Andrew and Janice Robertson

18 April 2023