

**From:** Trevor Blatchford [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, 30 January 2023 11:33 AM  
**To:** Northern Grampians ERAP Submissions 2023  
**Subject:** Ward boundaries and council review

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Hi, I would like to make the following submission regarding this review.

Outside of this council being abolished which is not part of the review then the shire still needs wards with no change to having two councillors in Kara Kara ward but a reduction in the amount of seats on council in the Stawell region. After a recent bi-election we are represented by a Stawell councillor at the moment this is not a desirable situation, the question is why did no one out of roughly two thousand possible candidates that reside in the Kara Kara ward want to stand for council at this recent bi-election, there is a view held by me and I know I'm not alone in this that Stawell is over represented, we only have two representatives to their five "not much hope of achieving anything" is a common view, and I believe this along with other northern grampians council issues, is why no one nominated which is a huge blow for local democracy in our community. People go on council for the most part, especially in country towns to try and make a difference where they live, so if a Stawell region member of the community manages to get on council even if it's via a community they don't lived in, in this case St Arnaud, they still vote on issues that directly affect them, they still get to play in their end of the sandpit so to speak.

A no wards shire would be a disaster for the Town of St Arnaud and region.

Outside of no reduced numbers on council in Stawell, then I believe in a shire like this with such a dominantly represented town that has no community connection to our region, then the best chance for us and to encourage participation by members of our community so we have a more democratic "local" council would be a stipulation that anyone seeking election as a councillor needs to reside in their particular ward to nominate.

Yours Sincerely,  
Trevor Blatchford,  
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St Arnaud, Victoria 3478.  
[REDACTED]