

# **LODDON HERALD**

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9 March 2024

### **SUBMISSION TO VICTORIAN ELECTORAL COMMISSION – LODDON SHIRE WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW**

This submission is made drawing on knowledge of local communities and their connections. Coming close to the enrolment deviation of the VEC proposal is what could be Option B that reconnects Korong Vale to the Wedderburn Ward and gives Tarnagulla Ward a major community by hiving off Bridgewater from Inglewood Ward.

It fits within the constraints of the review - ward names cannot be changed. A new-look Tarnagulla Ward would link the Loddon River towns of Bridgewater and Newbridge, retain a focus for council to enhance the liveability and economic performance of these communities and perhaps even end the vying for a limited pot for the shire's predicted first big growth areas of Inglewood and Bridgewater. Inglewood Ward under this option would again pick up areas around Kooyoora State Park, the natural bushland attraction at the town's backdoor.

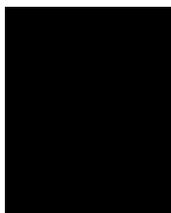
And bringing Korong Vale once more into Wedderburn Ward should be a no-brainer. There is ample and demonstrable community of interest.

That brings thinking to Boort Ward and with the Loddon Valley Highway an arterial blood vein, Serpentine could be moved into the Northern Oasis.

To balance up the numbers Terrick Ward would come south to include Campbells Forest, Bridgewater North and Leichardt districts. A real broadacre farming ward with commonality of aspirations and needs.

If the VEC does look at something other its own proposal, Boort Ward would be 2.69 per cent under the average enrolment, Inglewood Ward 0.8 per cent over, Tarnagulla Ward 5.9 per cent over, Terrick Ward 3.70 per cent under and Wedderburn Ward 0.40 per cent under. Figures that should accommodate areas of growth and decline over the next 10 years.

Local government is about strengthening local economies and empowering communities. This alternative proposal may make more sense in achieving good outcomes for individual communities and the Loddon Shire as a whole.



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