

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the electoral structure review for Glen Eira. I am a local resident who has grown up in Glen Eira, and who cares about the electoral process and democratic representation. I am independent and have no association with any political party.

### **Single-member wards**

I must begin by noting my profound opposition to the introduction of a single-member ward structure. Single-councillor wards lead to substantially poorer representation for local communities. Generally speaking, compared to multi-member wards, fewer people are represented by their preferred candidate, it is harder for women and minorities to be elected, and the winner-takes-all system leads to more adversarial politics. The abolition of multi-councillor wards and proportional representation is a major backwards step that will significantly harm local democracy. However, given single-member wards are now a requirement under the law, it is worth making those wards the best they can be.

### **Ward boundaries**

The ward boundaries under Glen Eira's current system of three three-member wards are excellent, and generally represent local communities well. However, I do not feel that preserving these boundaries in a nine-ward structure makes sense. In order to maintain numerical equality, many of the other boundaries outlined in Model 1 are unnecessarily complex, resulting in odd shapes and somewhat incoherent wards. Since all residents will end up in new wards anyway, preserving the existing boundaries makes little sense. Instead, **the boundaries outlined in Model 2 should be adopted.** These boundaries generally strongly reflect communities of interest, with easily recognised centres; for example, Moorleigh is a south Bentleigh East ward, and Wattle Grove is an Ormond-McKinnon ward. Similarly, their boundaries are clear and logical, almost always following main roads or suburb boundaries. I do not think I could have drawn better boundaries myself. I would advise against the adoption of Model 3, which distorts these boundaries in an effort to prevent the division of activity centres. These boundaries result in more complex boundaries and does not reduce the division of communities; they separate more residents from nearby shops and are harder to intuitively understand. As a result, I support the adoption of Model 2 for Glen Eira's ward boundaries.

### **Ward names**

I am pleased to see that the ward names suggested generally have some local geographic significance; there are no meaningless names like 'Kookaburra Ward' or

generic names like 'North Central Ward'. However, in some cases I think even clearer geographic names could be adopted, to better reflect the places they represent.

- **Caulfield Park Ward** is an excellent name, clear and with strong local significance. Its location within Glen Eira can be easily understood.
- Similarly, **Murrumbeena Ward** is another excellent name, adopting the name of the suburb, station, road, and park in the heart of the ward.
- **Moorleigh Ward** is another strong name, referring to a local park and with some historical significance.
- **Mallanbool Ward** is slightly weaker, given its namesake reserve's position at the fringe of the ward, but I do not think there is any better name.
- **Jasper Ward** is fine as a name, but I would instead recommend the ward be named **Bentleigh Ward**, given the suburb and ward are almost identical, and reflecting the central location of Bentleigh shops, station, and reserve.
- **Koornang Ward** is not a bad name, but given that road's location on the ward's boundary, I would suggest either **Neerim Ward** or **Grange Ward** instead. Another option would be to name this ward **Rosstown Ward**, preserving an existing ward name and the historic name of Carnegie, which survives in Rosstown Road and the Rosstown Hotel – both located within the ward.
- **Wattle Grove Ward** is not ideal as a name. It could be named **Ormond Ward**, or perhaps **Box Cottage Ward**, after the historic site and museum located near the ward's centre.
- **Greenmeadows Ward**, in my opinion, is a bad name. Derived from a small local park, it is vague and poorly reflects the ward's location and community. I suggest naming it **Elsternwick Ward**, after the major community centre, or otherwise **Rippon Lea Ward**, after the significant historic landmark.
- Finally, **Rosstown Ward** is a good name, but poorly suited to the area it is applied to here. Although the Rosstown Railway ran through the area, the name is more strongly associated with modern-day Carnegie, as mentioned above. Instead, I would suggest preserving another current ward name and naming it **Camden Ward**, a historic name for the area around Glen Huntly and Hawthorn Roads, which survives in the name of the Camden Town Hotel.

I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to make a submission, and hope that my comments may be of some use.