

Electoral structure review - Whittlesea City Council - Response Submission
John Fry - Mill Park - 15 November 2023, 11:19 am

I write in support of Model 1 as advertised. Keeping communities of interest together in a growing municipality I accept is difficult, but Model 1 has achieved this as positively as it is possible.

Generally speaking the boundaries are logical and easily identified, especially compared with Model 2 and its boundaries for Ganbu Gulinj and Epping Wards. The boundaries for North, Mernda and Painted Hills Wards in Model 1 seem the most logically consistent from a local perspective, given the legislative restrictions imposed by the process the panel was operating under when dealing with a growth corridor.

Models 2 and 3 cut up Mill Park in a way that does not keep communities of interest together. Model 3 is even worse with the boundaries of Ganbu Gulinj, Galada Tamboore, Boori and Kirrip Wards splitting communities in a way that makes little sense on the ground.

I support the naming of a greater percentage of Wards with Aboriginal names. In relation to the naming of the Wards there are a number that have a history and a logical reason to them, e.g. Mernda and Morang. On the other hand Ganbu Gulinj and Kirrip Wards have no such history. Whilst they seem to be based on new community centre names, these have very little status in the community and I question the community consultation in relation to their naming by Council. At this stage I would suggest more generic geographical names, but with a recommendation that Council conducts proper consultation with the effected communities to come up with aboriginal names that resonate with the community for the following election.

Whilst before 1997 the City of Whittlesea had 12 Councillors, I accept that when comparing us with other like sized Councils, 11 at this stage is reasonable.

I don't believe it is necessary to speak to the panel with a verbal submission.