

**Electoral structure review - Greater Geelong City Council - Response Submission
Douglas James Mason - Marcus Hill - 25 July 2023, 10:13 am**

I am a Bellarine Ward City Councillor and have served over two electoral cycles since 2017 and the election of a new council, post administration and post the Commission of enquiry, which recommended and implemented a single ward with 3 Councillors in the Bellarine. This Commission of enquiry, abolished the 3 separate wards on the Bellarine and found them counterproductive.

This single ward with 3 Councillors has over 6 years proven to be effective and fostered collaboration amongst Councillors, assisted in diverse areas of interest such as Sport, environment and the Arts. Further, Communities and townships formed community associations and represented these communities to the Three Councillors jointly and through a combined association.

My appreciation of the proposal is that there is a strong desire by the Bellarine Community to maintain the status quo - a single ward with three Councillors.

Further, the three models proposed are unsatisfactory in that they all split communities and townships inappropriately.

As an interim measure, I propose that the decision be deferred for a further three years while further analysis takes place.

If that proposal is refused, then I propose the third option with 12 Councillors is the least damaging and most acceptable, in the circumstances.

The second option with 11 Councillors is most undesirable, where Connewarre Ward stretches from Marcus Hill b(East) to Armstrong Creek (West), is very disruptive to communities, is a long, thin electorate difficult to access and represent.

Deep consideration should be given to Aboriginal names in whichever model is chosen now or in the future, in my best case of a deferral.