

Electoral structure review - Moonee Valley City Council - Response Submission
Alan and Maureen Williams - Ascot Vale - 08 November 2023, 02:07 pm

The attached document is a submission on behalf of my wife Maureen and myself.

Submission to MVCC Electoral Structure review

We are long-term (26+ years) residents of [REDACTED] Ascot Vale, adjacent to Kent St. Like many of our immediate neighbours, our lifestyle and most frequent movements involve travel (walking, cycling and driving) along Kent St to businesses along Mount Alexander Rd, to Travancore Park, and along the rail corridor to businesses in Newmarket. These are the localities, businesses and people that we regard as 'our neighbourhood' and community. We also regularly patronise food stores in Union Rd, to which we travel by car, but we don't feel the same sense of neighbourhood as we do with the closer services and facilities. In the past we have been involved in formal MVCC consultations on traffic issues in Kent St.

This sense of our community leads us to following comments in relation to the Models presented by the panel and some selected submissions by others that we have seen on the website:

- It is clear that the process involves balancing complex factors, including the size of wards, coherence of communities and localities. We hope that the presentation of two possible models does not suggest that there will be a stark choice of 'it's either or.', but rather that strong aspects of different proposals can be drawn upon to address weaknesses in each Model, so that the final proposal represents a well informed and considered choice. In this respect we believe that the submission from Councillor Iser in her personal capacity is very well informed and has much to commend it in it. Cr Iser's submission is also related to the distinct neighbourhoods identified within Moonee Valley as part of its planning activities. We strongly support this as a basis for the identification of the new Council wards. The submission of MVCC also makes well informed and valid points that need to be taken into account.
- In relation to our location and the structure of the ward in which we will be included, we see problems for our neighbourhood in both Models, although Model 2 is slightly less problematic than Model 1. The problems relate to the boundaries imposing artificial divisions between sections of our community which place people with common interests and circumstances in different wards. This is most problematic in Model 1 by the use of Kent St as a ward boundary. There are traffic management issues along Kent St that affect the community on both sides of the street and in streets both to the north and south. Model 1 also separates a significant section of Ascot Vale north of Kent St from Travancore and Newmarket and adds it to a ward focused more on Union Rd and Whiskey Hill. Model 2 divides our community by not fully using Ascot Vale Rd as a ward boundary resulting in pockets separated from their neighbours, especially the pocket bounded by Ascot Vale Rd, Racecourse Rd and the Flemington Racecourse railway line. We see the Djerring Ward proposed in Cr Iser's model as a much better alternative than the wards proposed in either Model 1 or Model 2.

Alan and Maureen Williams
8 November 2023.