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1 Introduction

My comment on suggestions applies to all suggestions relating to the boundaries of districts within Greater Sydney. See Table 1.

As the Panel will be aware, I submitted a suggestion (NSWR200630/27) and will occasionally refer to it throughout this comment. I will take the opportunity to briefly include an erratum for my suggestion – in Table A.1, “Gordon” should read “Ku-ring-gai”, and in Table A.2, “Sutherland” should read “Miranda”.

Two weeks is not much time to review suggestions, search for alternatives, and produce a written comment. The Panel has emphasised that comments should provide alternative solutions. Naturally, one is inclined to provide alternatives for something with which one disagrees. For these reasons, my comments on individual suggestions may come across as quite negative. I want to reassure all contributors that there is plenty that I agree with but have not mentioned. I would also like to acknowledge the effort and dedication that some contributors have had in contributing to multiple redistributions at both the federal and state levels.

| Ref. No. | Name | Sec. |
|---------------|-----------------|------|
| NSWR200608/2 | M Gordon | 4.1 |
| NSWR200618/4 | J Waddell | 4.2 |
| NSWR200626/7 | D Markou | 3.1 |
| NSWR200629/11 | A Portnoy | 3.2 |
| NSWR200629/12 | Y Ash | 3.3 |
| NSWR200629/13 | E Cossons | 3.3 |
| NSWR200629/14 | J Ash | 3.3 |
| NSWR200629/15 | G Cossons | 3.3 |
| NSWR200629/16 | N Ash | 3.3 |
| NSWR200629/17 | J Eyre | 3.4 |
| NSWR200629/19 | J Nikolova | 3.1 |
| NSWR200630/20 | P Williams | 3.5 |
| NSWR200630/23 | A Greenwich | 3.6 |
| NSWR200630/25 | C Magee | 4.3 |
| NSWR200630/26 | M Latham | 3.7 |
| NSWR200701/30 | <i>Greens</i> | 5.1 |
| NSWR200701/33 | M Deeth | 3.8 |
| NSWR200701/34 | <i>Liberal</i> | 5.2 |
| NSWR200701/35 | <i>National</i> | 5.3 |
| NSWR200701/36 | M Mulcair | 4.4 |
| NSWR200701/39 | <i>Labor</i> | 5.4 |
| NSWR200701/40 | J Andrews | 3.2 |
| NSWR200701/41 | B Coorey | 3.1 |

Table 1: Suggestions referred to

2 General comments

There are a few recurring themes in a number of suggestions that I will discuss here.

2.1 Castle Hill district

As I feared would be the case, there are several suggestions that suggest moving parts of Castle Hill SSC from Castle Hill district with no other changes. These changes seem obvious and appealing, but completely ignore the communities of interest across the North West.

In the redistribution ahead of the 2015 election, the boundaries of Castle Hill were more appropriate than they are now. Pre-2015, it may well have been appropriate for Rouse Hill and parts of Kellyville to be placed in the Hawkesbury district. But this part of Sydney has changed. The west of Cattai Creek has been mostly filled in with compact family homes and apartments. The transformation of Box Hill is well underway, and it will be fully suburban in a few years. By the next redistribution, there will be no more semirural areas west of Cattai Creek except for Nelson.

As I explained in my suggestion, the areas in the existing Castle Hill district on either side of Cattai Creek are the most diametrically opposite parts of The Hills LGA. Lifestyles are very different by virtue of the medium-density suburban versus semirural distinction. The population is also very different, with the areas to the east consisting of much older families and couples, and areas to the west consisting of very young families. And as I pointed out in my suggestion – look at how many roads there are crossing Cattai Creek. There is no physical boundary in this region more imposing than Cattai Creek.

These demographic changes have rendered the existing boundaries of Castle Hill untenable. And yet, some suggestions propose making this even worse, by removing further parts of Castle Hill. The only strength in the existing boundaries (and it is a tenuous one) is that the district is united via Castle Hill SSC, and particularly by Castle Towers.

As a resident of Rouse Hill, I urge the Panel to use Cattai Creek as the eastern boundary of whatever district contains Rouse Hill and Kellyville.

2.2 Baulkham Hills and Epping districts

Elsewhere in Northern and North West Sydney, a number of suggestions acknowledge that the existing boundaries are inadequate, but do not address the underlying problems. This is especially true of Baulkham Hills and Epping districts. The location of Cherrybrook in Epping district borders on the indefensible and must be addressed in this redistribution. North Rocks and West Pennant Hills should not be part of a district to which they are almost completely disconnected when there are clear alternatives available. I will discuss this in more detail in my comments directed at individual suggestions.

2.3 Canterbury-Bankstown (and surrounds)

There are numerous suggestions that involve the abolition of Canterbury or Lakemba, or the existence of a district straddling Bankstown and Fairfield LGAs (and some feature both). The approach that I took to this region in my suggestion was largely to avoid either of these scenarios.

The existing boundaries of Canterbury and Lakemba are clear and strong. As the Panel will be aware, there have been three suggestions from residents in suburbs around Canterbury urging the Panel to avoid drastic changes to Canterbury district.

The approach I have taken in my suggestion in moving Strathfield west, East Hills south, and Holsworthy out of the Sutherland Shire all contribute to:

- preserving Canterbury and Lakemba in their existing forms,
- simplifying boundaries in the Sutherland Shire, partly satisfying suggestions S12-16, and without the creation of numerical disparities in the Illawarra,
- significantly improving the existing boundaries of Bankstown by straightening out its southeastern panhandle,
- avoiding a district that straddles Bankstown and Fairfield LGAs,
- allowing the Main South line to be used as the boundary between Auburn and Granville.

The changes to Strathfield and East Hills districts provide Canterbury-Bankstown (and surrounds) enough breathing room to preserve and in some cases improve upon the existing boundaries, and to avoid a trans-Bankstown-Fairfield district.

Many suggestions, including my own, agree that there is a need to abolish a Western Sydney district somewhere between Canterbury and Blacktown. The districts along this line that have the weakest boundaries *by far* are Prospect and Seven Hills. Prospect straddles the periphery of three LGAs, with very fuzzy, weak, and unclear boundaries. In abolishing Prospect, we are able to have Blacktown, Fairfield, and Granville districts respect the LGA boundaries that Prospect currently crosses. On the other hand, Canterbury and Lakemba have very strong boundaries, and no suggestion that proposes abolishing either of these districts finds a way to improve the boundaries in this region.

2.4 Communities of interest in new suburbs

I am deeply concerned about the approach taken by a number of suggestions in relation to how new suburban areas are treated. S34 (Liberal) and S36 (M Mulcair) are particularly illustrative of this. In S36:

Using the Rouse Hill suburb boundary seems to be the best way to split the Rouse Hill/Kellyville growth area between different seats, so that all the growth is not bottled up in Castle Hill.

This change also ensures that the Jordan Springs and Ropes Crossing growth areas are split between different seats, instead of being bottled up in a single over-quota District.

The main issue with the existing Camden is that most of the growth is bottled up in a single seat. [...] With these changes, the growth area in this part of Sydney is now split between several seats.

In all three of these cases, Mulcair has, *as a goal*, the partitioning of areas that share a very strong community of interest.

As I stated in my suggestion, the community of interest that arises from new residential developments is one of the strongest communities of interest that can be found in metropolitan areas. There are numerous ongoing community concerns in these areas, such as where the new schools and hospitals will be, when the main road will be upgraded to accommodate for increased traffic, when the metro line will be extended,

whether the proposed six-storey apartments should be built, and so on. The intensity of these concerns is far greater than in most other metropolitan areas because the area itself is changing so rapidly, leading to frequent community forums and engagement between residents and the local council. New and emerging commercial and community hubs such as Ed Square Town Centre, Oran Park Town Centre, and Rouse Hill Town Centre bring the community together. Furthermore, new residential areas bring about a level of demographic homogeneity that cannot be found anywhere else in the state – the vast majority of residents are young couples who have recently attained the financial security to settle down in a suburban area and have children.

From a purely community of interest perspective, it would be absolutely absurd to say that Rouse Hill and Kellyville *should* be split. Now, I understand that community of interest is not the reason that Mulcair is using here. And I fully acknowledge that it is not Mulcair's intention to split communities of interest. Mulcair is attempting to ensure that high-growth districts do not run away in excess enrolment by the 2027 election, and to adhere to the current enrolment rule while ensuring that high-growth districts are not above quota on projected enrolment.

If the current enrolment rule were scrapped, almost everything I have just discussed in relation to Mulcair's approach would not be a problem. The current enrolment rule is a consequence of the *Constitution Act 1902*, which I hope to see amended before the next redistribution. The rate and localisation of population growth in Greater Sydney is unprecedented, rendering the current enrolment rule unsustainable. Until that happens, there are three approaches that could be taken:

1. Draw oversize districts wherever forced by the current enrolment rule, but equalise (projected) enrolment elsewhere.
2. Wherever an oversize district needs to be drawn because of the current enrolment rule, counterbalance the district with adjoining undersize districts, thus ensuring the region surrounding the oversize district is not underrepresented.
3. Avoid drawing districts where the current enrolment rule forces the district to be oversize.

The approach I have taken in my suggestion is (2). As explained in my suggestion, the consequence of (1) is that all of Western Sydney will be underrepresented.

The approach that Mulcair has taken in (3). As I have discussed above, I strongly object to this approach as it has consequences that are grossly antithetical to and

egregiously violate community of interest considerations. The current enrolment rule is a constraint that inhibits our ability to achieve equalisation of enrolment, and it should be treated as precisely that. Other considerations, especially communities of interest, should not be bent to circumvent this constraint. The best thing that the Panel can do is that wherever there is a district that must be significantly above quota, the district be counterbalanced by adjoining districts that are below quota. In this way, we ensure that the region surrounding the oversize district is not underrepresented, adhering to the “one vote, one value” principle.

S34 (Liberal) takes a similar approach:

Our approach to the rest of Western Sydney proceeds from the principle that compliance with the statutory dual margins of allowance based on current and projected enrolments is best facilitated by distributing high growth localities between as many electoral districts as feasible.

Thus, the Liberal Party has *as a goal, as a starting point*, the splitting and cracking of young families in Sydney’s new suburbs. The suggestion goes on *to present a table* outlining how these areas will be partitioned!

Should the Panel adopt this approach, this redistribution will lead to the diminution of the voices of young aspirational families in the most dynamic and rapidly-changing parts of the state – and at a time when their concerns (e.g. in relation to the new airport and aerotropolis) are more relevant than ever to the whole of state politics. The determination of the Panel must not lead to the marginalisation of these communities.

2.5 South West Sydney

My concerns in relation to South West Sydney largely follow from those I have presented above. Specifically in relation to South West Sydney, the Panel should:

- keep Bardia and Edmondson Park united as they are extremely similar demographically and united by Edmondson Park station and Ed Square Town Centre,
- avoid splitting the new suburbs along Camden Valley avoid splitting the new suburbs along Camden Valley Way (Gledswood Hills, Gregory Hills, Oran Park, and the Emerald Hills, Vulcan Ridge, and Willowdale estates) between more than two districts, especially as these suburbs are united by Leppington station,

- avoid crossing the boundary between Camden and Campbelltown LGAs south of Raby Road, or at the very least, south of Gregory Hills Drive and Badgally Road.

If the Panel is insistent on avoiding a district that is more 10% above quota (on projected enrolment) at all costs, S26 (Latham) and S35 (National Party) present some ideas that may help to achieve a compromise between my suggestion and others. The Panel could transfer Appin, Silverdale, and Warragamba out of Wollondilly district in exchange for parts of Camden LGA southwest of the Nepean River. A new Narellan district would sit north of the Nepean River. The Panel may find that this helps to avoid splitting the new suburban areas and to avoid a trans-Camden-Campbelltown district while also ensuring that no district has a projected enrolment too much higher than 5%. I further note that S26 suggests that the M4 be maintained as a boundary, which is much more achievable under this configuration. The exact boundaries suggested in S35 look promising, but they create a significant enrolment imbalance between Sydney and non-Sydney districts. Unfortunately I do not have the time to present a concrete solution, but the Panel should explore this further.

2.6 Davidson district

I agree with most suggestions that propose the abolition of Davidson. I also think that the suggestions that do *not* abolish Davidson illustrate why it should be abolished. In S4 (J Waddell), Ku-ring-gai is pushed all the way to Westleigh, resulting in the worsening of the boundaries of Hornsby district. In S35 (National), the flow-on is channeled in the other direction, squeezing the districts on the North Shore and culminating in the abolition of Ryde, a district that really should not be abolished.

3 Regional and single district suggestions

3.1 Canterbury (S7, S19, S41)

It is possible to leave Canterbury mostly unchanged. S36 (M Mulcair) leaves it entirely unchanged, though it is difficult to achieve this without leaving the St George districts significantly below quota. Nonetheless, the Panel may well decide that this is justified, especially given these suggestions.

The northeastern boundary of Canterbury (with Summer Hill) could be left unchanged, though as I noted in my suggestion, barring any alteration to Rockdale, this likely results in an hourglass-shaped Summer Hill. My suggestion exchanges Hurlstone Park for Ashbury, the latter of which is another suburb in the former Canterbury LGA. The Panel certainly has the option of retaining the existing boundaries between these two districts, as suggested by Coorey.

Leaving the boundaries of Canterbury further south entirely unchanged is more problematic. The St George districts are well under quota and need to expand north. Some of suggestions involve Kogarah pushing into Oatley and Oatley expanding north, avoiding some of the changes to Canterbury in my suggestion. However, this tends to lead to the partitioning of Lakemba SSC between Canterbury and Lakemba districts, and/or unclear boundaries around Bankstown SSC.

Both the Labor Party and Liberal Party suggestions involve effectively abolishing Canterbury and creating a new Earlwood district. This is unnecessary, and alternatives can be found in S4 (J Waddell), S27 (myself), S36 (M Mulcair), and S37 (National).

The suburbs of Belmore and Campsie (the residents of which Markou and Nikolova submitted their suggestions on behalf of) can remain united within Canterbury district, and I cannot see any pressing case to the contrary.

3.2 Gosford and Hawkesbury (S11, S40)

These two suggestions pose an interesting idea that I admittedly had not considered. It is possible that Hawkesbury district could lose Kenthurst (as suggested in my suggestion), and then pick up roughly 3,000 electors in the semirural part of the former

Gosford LGA. This would put Hawkesbury district very close to a quota. This would require modifying districts that do not need to change (Gosford and Terrigal), but if there is a strong community of interest argument – which it appears there is – then it is worth considering.

The prospect of a trans-Gosford-Hornsby district is a rabbit hole I do not have time to fully explore, but I encourage the Panel to give it due consideration. I note that a district comprised of the aforementioned areas of the former Gosford LGA, the Hornsby to Berowra corridor, the semirural Hills/Hornsby suburbs, and parts of Hawkesbury LGA along the MacDonal River would be close to a quota.

3.3 Western Sutherland (S12-16)

Uniting this entire postcode within a *single* district would require radical changes to the Illawarra and South Coast districts. However, I concur that it is unnecessary for this postcode to be split between *three* districts, and the Panel can reduce this to two. There are a few suggestions that achieve this by moving Holsworthy district out of the Sutherland Shire.

3.4 Ryde and Epping (S17)

I absolutely agree with this suggestion. The uptick of Ryde district into Parramatta LGA is something that bothers me whenever I look at the electoral map. Hillside Crescent is in the northeast corner of this uptick, which, as Eyre mentions, is separated from the south by Edna Hunt Sanctuary.

3.5 Kogarah (S20)

The Panel could implement this suggestion by reorienting Rockdale and Kogarah to an east-west alignment. The boundaries could contain segments of Forest Road, Queens Road and Bay Street.

3.6 Sydney (S23)

I share the sentiment expressed in this suggestion that it would be ideal to unite all of Surry Hills within Sydney. This was actually one of the initial goals I had in mind when considering the boundaries in this region. The boundaries for Sydney in this suggestion are close to ideal.

The problems with these boundaries arise when considering the adjoining districts of Newtown and Heffron. In particular, what happens to Redfern and Centennial Park?

With the remainder of Surry Hills transferred to Sydney, Redfern is tenuously connected to the rest of Newtown, and forms a panhandle. Redfern should therefore be transferred to Heffron. It is hard to find a configuration that does not lead to Heffron becoming an ugly bits-and-pieces district. This is why I eventually decided against uniting Surry Hills within Sydney.

I have revisited this idea thanks to this suggestion, and have also taken inspiration from other suggestions to come up with a solution that might be defensible:

- Transfer Centennial Park and Moore Park to Coogee. South of Moore Park, align the boundary between Coogee and Heffron to Anzac Parade.
- Transfer Redfern from Newtown to Heffron.
- Transfer Erskineville, St Peters, Sydenham, and parts of Alexandria northwest of Mitchell Road from Heffron to Newtown.
- Transfer Tempe from Heffron to Summer Hill.
- Expand Newtown to cover the remainder of Lewisham and Petersham, and use Livingstone and Marrickville Roads to complete the southwestern boundary. Newtown thus assumes a roughly equilateral triangular shape.

Perhaps the most objectionable feature of this configuration is that Summer Hill becomes even longer and more stretched out, arcing from Haberfield to Tempe. Splitting St Peters, Sydenham, and Tempe is already less than ideal. I suppose transferring Tempe into Rockdale is an option, and may in fact be even more effective in preserving the existing boundaries of Lakemba and Canterbury than my suggestion, though this would necessitate a shake-up of the St George districts.

3.7 Outer Western Sydney (S26)

Many suggestions (and commentary I have read elsewhere) express a negative view of the existing boundaries of Mulgoa, but I have suspected that people who are more familiar with the area might not perceive the disconnectedness as all that bad due to other factors. While it is a sample size of one, this suggestion appears to be in line with this hypothesis, with the emphasis on the M4 as a significant boundary.

I strongly agree with the assessment that hybridising the Camden and Campbelltown LGAs should be avoided, and my suggestion in this region is predicated on this – though I make an exception to this areas north of Raby Road where the LGA boundary cuts through the Willowdale estate.

The Panel will find it difficult to both maintain the M4 as a boundary and avoid a trans-Camden-Campbelltown district without some exchanges between Wollondilly district and its northern neighbours.

3.8 Wollondilly (S33)

Leaving the northern boundary of Wollondilly district unchanged is possible. As noted in my suggestion, moving Heathcote south entirely rectifies both the excess in voters in the Illawarra and South Coast districts, and also the imbalance between Sydney and non-Sydney districts – all without any significant alteration to Wollondilly district, which is the usual victim when it comes to addressing these changes.

Nonetheless, further changes to Wollondilly district involving the exchange of Appin, Silverdale, and Warragamba for Camden may be justified, as discussed in Section 2.5.

4 Whole-of-state suggestions from individuals

4.1 S2 (M Gordon)

I infer from Gordon’s opening remarks and the submission date in early June that this suggestion was entirely developed prior to the release of projected enrolment data and had not been revised since then. Gordon also claims that the projected enrolment data may be significantly inaccurate. I do not know enough to comment on the veracity of Gordon’s claim. Regardless, the projected enrolment provided by the Panel is what we have to work with. I am unable to find any indication of how Gordon obtained the projected enrolment figures tabulated at the end of the suggestion.

There are numerous cases where some modifications to Gordon’s suggestion are very much warranted to bring districts closer to a quota. I find myself somewhat puzzled by some of the statements regarding future enrolment, for example, the assessment that the suggested Penrith district “will be below quota but these areas are relatively fast growing”. The data provided by the Panel shows that the Penrith suggested by Gordon is growing slightly slower than the rest of the state, and the parts of Londonderry suggested to be transferred into Penrith are projected to *decline* in enrolment.

4.1.1 Sutherland Shire

Gordon’s suggestion leaves the Illawarra and South Coast districts collectively 22% above quota. The boundary between Heathcote and Keira should be moved to transfer excess electors in these districts to Heathcote.

I disagree with Gordon’s assessment of districts in the Sutherland Shire. Alfords Point and Illawong are completely disconnected from the rest of Miranda, Heathcote has a very strange northern boundary, and Barden Ridge is very far away from the rest of Holsworthy. Moving the boundary between Heathcote and Keira south permits the simplification of boundaries in the Sutherland Shire, and addresses numerical imbalances as discussed above.

4.1.2 Badgerys Creek district

I like Gordon's suggested Badgerys Creek district, but it is approximately 5% *above* quota on current enrolment, and 33% above quota on projected enrolment. It will need to be cut down significantly.

4.1.3 Central Sydney

Gordon's suggestion involves the abolition of Canterbury. See Section 2.3 for a discussion on this.

Gordon's suggestion splits Paddington. During the last federal NSW redistribution, the Committee's proposal split Paddington, and there were more objections relating to this matter than any other. I imagine that Paddington residents would feel the same about this at the state level. Paddington should thus be fully united.

Gordon's suggested Auburn extends into Greenacre, which is rather disconnected from the rest of the district. Auburn should instead expand west or southwest.

4.1.4 Western and North West Sydney

I concur with Gordon in uniting the 60s-70s public housing suburbs northwest of Mount Druitt within a single district. However, Ropes Crossing is not one of these suburbs and should remain united with Jordan Springs and Marsden Park – especially if Colebee is to be removed from Mount Druitt.

As a resident of Rouse Hill, I strongly object to Gordon's suggested Castle Hill district. See Section 2.1 for more on this.

Gordon's suggested Baulkham Hills is a substantial improvement upon the existing boundaries, with North Rocks and West Pennant Hills transferred out. Having lived in Stanhope Gardens myself, I do not believe that it is all that bad for a district to cross Old Windsor Road. However, I suspect that the exact configuration suggested by Gordon may be incompatible with ameliorating Castle Hill district.

4.2 S4 (J Waddell)

I agree with many of the observations made by Waddell. However, a few aspects of the suggestion are worrying to me.

4.2.1 South West

Waddell's suggested Campbelltown district is a trans-Camden-Campbelltown district, which should be avoided, but I admit that this is one of the better ways such a district can be realised. There is another substantial problem at the other end of the suggested Campbelltown district – Waddell suggests transferring parts of Rosemeadow and St Helens Park to Wollondilly. I cannot possibly imagine that residents of these suburbs would find this acceptable. Wollondilly district can remain mostly unchanged, and I note that in Waddell's suggestion, both Wollondilly and Goulburn are above quota.

Waddell's suggestion also involves splitting the new suburbs along Camden Valley Way (Gledswood Hills, Gregory Hills, Oran Park, and the Emerald Hills and Willowdale estates) between *four* different districts – Badgerys Creek, Camden, Campbelltown, and Macquarie Fields. Uniting them within a single district is likely infeasible, but they should certainly not be split across four districts.

Waddell also seems to be suggesting that the boundary between Macquarie Fields and Camden be left unchanged, when this boundary cuts diagonally through properties (i.e. it does not respect cadastral boundaries) and crudely divides the Willowdale estate. This was formerly an LGA boundary, but has since been amended. At the very least, all of the Willowdale estate should be united within a single district.

4.2.2 Penrith and Blacktown

As noted by Waddell, it would be preferable to unite all of Glenmore Park in a single district. I think it is a little unfair to place parts of Glenmore Park in Badgerys Creek when Glenmore Park is even further away from other suburban areas in its district than it is in the existing Mulgoa, especially when Glenmore Park is not even wholly united.

I must strongly disagree with the suggestion regarding the southeastern boundary of Londonderry district. I take it that the intention is to use a road as a boundary and

better connect Marsden Park to the rest of the district. But there are some very serious problems with this.

The suggested boundary cuts off a very narrow sliver of suburbs north and northwest of Mount Druitt, needlessly dividing the small suburbs of Bidwill and Shalvey. The 60s-70s public housing suburbs northwest of Mount Druitt – also home to one of Sydney’s largest indigenous Australian communities – should be united within a single district. As outlined in my suggestion, this is entirely feasible. However, I accept that this is a very forcing constraint, and the Panel may quite reasonably decide that the area needs to remain split between Londonderry and Mount Druitt. But Waddell’s suggestion is certainly not the way to do this. I further note that Waddell’s suggestion splits this area into *three* districts.

Waddell’s suggestion splits Bidwill, a particularly disadvantaged suburb. Bidwill is also a tight-knit community. The Pacific Palms Supermarket serves as its community hub, adjacent to two places of worship and the Chifley College campus, catering for the educational needs of children in the area from preschool to Year 12. Bidwill is a small suburb with clear SSC boundaries and should not be split.

These boundaries also see Oakhurst transferred to Londonderry, which is yet another distinct community of interest. Oakhurst is completely different both to Marsden Park and to Bidwill, and should remain united with Dean Park, Glendenning, Hassall Grove, and Plumpton.

A much better boundary that maintains the rest of Londonderry district suggested by Waddell is to transfer Emerton and Whalan out, and Shalvey in. The transmission line through Popondetta Park can form the exact boundary, as the green space beneath it physically separates suburbs in this area.

I further suggest an alteration to the boundary between Waddell’s Mount Druitt and Blacktown North districts to better align these districts to the distinct communities of interest across Blacktown LGA. The residential parts of Minchinbury and Rooty Hill should be transferred out of Mount Druitt district, with this district instead gaining Emerton and Whalan, and retaining Bidwill, Blackett, Dharruk, and Hebersham. This ensures that the 60s-70s suburbs northwest of Mount Druitt are split between only two districts, and that the 80s suburbs east of Mount Druitt are united within the district to the east.

This district to the east should then contain all of Bungaribee, Doonside, Marayong, Woodcroft, and parts of Quakers Hill south of the M7. Under this configuration, “Blacktown North” is no longer a suitable name. Possible names include “Doonside”, “Rooty Hill”, “Eastern Creek” (appropriate given this creek flows through the centre of the district), and “Bungaribee” (a Darug place name).

As I discussed in my suggestion, I was pulling my hair out trying to cut Riverstone down to a quota without violating the current enrolment rule. I saw Waddell’s suggested boundaries as a possibility, but quickly dismissed it. Acacia Gardens is split by these boundaries, despite it being a very small suburb with clear SSC boundaries. The western end of this area (in Quakers Hills SSC) north of the M7 is poorly connected to the rest of the district to the south. I would contend that the best solution here is to only transfer Glenwood from Riverstone. There are no clear boundaries that cut down Riverstone further (without violating the current enrolment rule).

4.2.3 Northern and North West Sydney

As a resident of Rouse Hill, I strongly object to Waddell’s suggested Kellyville district. Waddell even acknowledges the problem with the existing boundaries:

Castle Hill is part high-density urban and part low-density semi-rural [...] The lack of major east-west running roads means that it’s impossible to re-draw boundaries to separate those demographics into different Districts.

I am very perplexed by what Waddell means in the latter part of that quote. There is an *extremely* clear boundary that separates these two regions – Cattai Creek. Everything to the west of Cattai Creek is fully suburban or will be fully suburban in the next few years. The subdivision, redevelopment, and transformation of Box Hill is already well underway. Everything to the east of Cattai Creek will remain semirural for the foreseeable future due to infrastructural constraints and the well-established character of these suburbs. See Section 2.1 for more on this.

Regarding Waddell’s suggested Northmead district, I would make a minor alteration in uniting all of North Rocks within the same district – including the 400 electors north of the M2. I think Waddell’s Northmead district in itself is on the whole quite reasonable, but I worry about the complications it causes for neighbouring Epping.

Waddell acknowledges the odd shape of Epping district, but I am not convinced that the suggestion addresses its underlying problems.

The outer southwestern layer of West Pennant Hills is peeled off and left part of Baulkham Hills district, where it is arguably even more disconnected than it already is in the existing Baulkham Hills. If the portion of West Pennant Hills within The Hills LGA needs to be split, the best way (and possibly the only defensible way) of doing so is to approximately follow Darling Mills Creek, which separates the older parts of West Pennant Hills from the newer parts.

The suggested Epping still mixes substantial parts of Cherrybrook and West Pennant Hills with Epping and Carlingford. I provided a lengthy discussion of why this should be avoided in my own suggestion, having myself lived in Beecroft, Carlingford, and Cherrybrook.

Waddell's suggestion worsens the boundaries of Hornsby district. There is a piece of Hornsby SSC in Hornsby district dangling like a tentacle over Ku-ring-gai district. The Cherrybrook part of the suggested Hornsby is almost completely disconnected from the rest of the district, connected only via the Galston Road rollercoaster several kilometres to the north, and it does not share a significant community of interest with suburbs to the north of Hornsby. The presence of Pennant Hills and Westleigh in this district would at least somewhat strengthen the case for including parts of Cherrybrook, but Waddell's suggestion transfers these suburbs to Ku-ring-gai.

My family was more adventurous than most, so we often travelled to Westfield Hornsby for shopping while we lived in Cherrybrook. (This was also a legacy of us having lived in Beecroft.) However, I think you will find that we were the exception – most residents of Cherrybrook rarely travel to Hornsby, instead preferring to shop at Castle Towers. The suburbs further north were a place of mystery and curiosity to us – “Wait, there are suburbs to the north of Hornsby?”

All of these problems largely stem from the the retention of Davidson district. As a district in itself, Waddell's suggested Davidson district is quite sensible. But in the bigger picture, Davidson district needs to be abolished to create the breathing room necessary to prevent Ku-ring-gai's continuing encroachment into Hornsby LGA.

4.3 S25 (C Magee)

I agree that parts of Heffron should be transferred to Coogee. However, I do not see a need for Tempe to be transferred to Rockdale, unless the Panel seeks to undertake a more radical shake-up of this region (see Section 3.6).

I agree that Davidson should be abolished. Prolonging the existence of Davidson is problematic, as discussed in Section 2.6. However, as identified by other suggestions, there is a need to abolish another district somewhere between Canterbury and Bankstown. One of the new districts will be in South West Sydney as suggested by Magee, and the other will need to be somewhere in Northern or North West Sydney.

4.4 S36 (M Mulcair)

As discussed in Section 2.4, I am deeply concerned by Mulcair's approach of splitting communities of interest in newer suburban areas.

4.4.1 Sutherland Shire and East Hills district

While I like Mulcair's idea of East Hills expanding into the Moorebank area, the suggestion leaves the Sutherland, Illawarra, and South Coast districts collectively 20% above quota. Without changes to the western boundaries of the Illawarra and South Coast districts, there needs to be a metropolitan district containing a small part of the Sutherland Shire.

4.4.2 Central Sydney

On the whole, I very much like what Mulcair has suggested for this region. The Panel may want to make some minor alterations to better equalise enrolment in a number of districts.

4.4.3 Northern Beaches

I sympathise with Mulcair's suggestion in that it would be ideal to have three districts whose union is precisely the Northern Beaches LGA. However, these three districts

are collectively 13% above quota. There needs to be a district on the North Shore containing a small part of the Northern Beaches.

4.4.4 Baulkham Hills and Epping districts

There are many aspects of Mulcair's suggestion in relation to the North West that are very worrying to me as a resident of the North West.

Much the same can be said of Mulcair's suggested Epping as of Waddell's. Mulcair does not address the underlying problem of this district – that it runs north-south across the the M2. The Epping suggested by Mulcair is still a “bits-and-pieces” district, and in some ways it is worse than the existing Epping – there is now a panhandle into Cherrybrook, and it places parts of Cherrybrook in the same district as Eastwood! Epping district needs to be reoriented to an east-west alignment, and not extend north of Pennant Hills Road.

Mulcair's peculiarly shaped Baulkham Hills exacerbates almost all of the problems with the existing Baulkham Hills. The Carlingford, North Rocks, and West Pennant Hills areas are now even more detached from the rest of the district. It removes parts of Castle Hill, which at least somewhat strengthened the connectedness and coherence of the district. There are many different communities of interest that have needlessly been split and mixed to form this district.

The solution starts with an east-west realignment of Epping, which could take the North Rocks area. Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill SSCs should be united in the same district, as the two share much in common, being the older suburbs of The Hills LGA. Another district (essentially a reconfigured Castle Hill) should unite the corridor from Box Hill to Bella Vista.

4.4.5 Hawkesbury district

By far the most concerning district in Mulcair's suggestion is Hawkesbury. Uniting the semirural Hills/Hornsby suburbs I will concede is a positive. Splitting Hawkesbury LGA is unnecessary. But it is placing Rouse Hill and parts of Cherrybrook in this district that is completely and utterly indefensible. I should note that I have lived in both the Cherrybrook and Rouse Hill parts of this suggested district.

Firstly, Cherrybrook and the Hawkesbury. The only time we ever travelled to the Hawkesbury while living in Cherrybrook was when there was a church event held at Merroo Christian Centre in Kurrajong. It felt like a day trip. Kurrajong, and all the areas we travelled through to get there, are not even part of the suggested Hawkesbury district. I make no exaggeration in saying that you will find many people in Cherrybrook who will not recognise a single place name in the parts of Hawkesbury LGA that are in Mulcair's suggested Hawkesbury district. I would imagine that awareness of existence is a rudimentary criterion for a community of interest. Lifestyles in Cherrybrook and the Hawkesbury are also completely different – I have never seen a sheep or alpaca in Cherrybrook!

Secondly, Rouse Hill and Hawkesbury. Residents of Rouse Hill have the greatest affinity to suburbs to the south, including Beaumont Hills and Kellyville. Residents of these suburbs further south often travel north to shop at Rouse Hill Town Centre, so it makes no sense to be ripping out Rouse Hill from Castle Hill district. Residents of Rouse Hill rarely travel north. I currently live in Rouse Hill, and I regret to admit, I sometimes forget that McGraths Hill even exists. If a resident of Rouse Hill does travel north, it is more than likely to Windsor or Richmond, not to Pitt Town. Residents in Pitt Town and nearby towns who need to travel towards the CBD are more likely to make use of the Richmond Line, the stations of which Mulcair has placed in another district.

Thirdly and finally, Cherrybrook and Rouse Hill. It can hardly be said that these suburbs share a community of interest. These suburbs are 12 kilometres apart, and it gets worse when considering road connections, and even worse when considering road connections that run within Mulcair's suggested Hawkesbury. When I lived in Cherrybrook, one of my family members passed away, and was buried at Rouse Hill. At that time, the only parts of Sydney we had lived in were Beecroft and Cherrybrook. Another one of my family members initially objected to this burial location with the reasoning, "We have nothing to do with Rouse Hill." At the time, I had scarcely even heard of Rouse Hill.

The boundaries of the existing Hawkesbury district are close to ideal, uniting all of Hawkesbury LGA in a single district, along with some other semirural areas. It is one of the last districts that should "bear the brunt of changes in Northern Sydney".

For all these reasons, I strongly object to Mulcair's suggested Hawkesbury. Only minimal changes are necessary for Hawkesbury district. The Panel should instead focus on

redrawing districts in parts of Northern and North West Sydney that needlessly cut and mix different communities of interest, such as reorienting Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill to a north-south alignment, and Epping and Parramatta to an east-west alignment. As a former resident of Stanhope Gardens, I really like Mulcair's suggested Parklea district, but this does not even come close to justifying the suggested changes to Hawkesbury district.

4.4.6 Macarthur region

Mulcair's suggested Ingleburn district cuts across the distinctive transport corridors of the Macarthur region. Districts in this region should instead conform to a north-south alignment. Ingleburn is also a trans-Camden-Campbelltown district, which should be avoided. Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn, and Minto are all very similar suburbs and well-connected to each other. They should ideally be united within the same district, not split across three.

5 Whole-of-state suggestions from political parties

5.1 S30 (Greens)

There are a few parts of the Greens suggestion involving unnecessary changes that would see districts cross hard physical boundaries in ways I imagine the Panel would never dare to consider.

Epping could move to South Turramurra. Consequently, Ryde could move east and take in parts of West Pymble.

South Turramurra would be completely disconnected from the rest of Epping, and there is hardly a community of interest. To get from North Epping to South Turramurra, you have to either travel four kilometres east to get to Ryde Road, or four kilometres west along Beecroft Road to get to Pennant Hills Road and then onto the Comenarra Parkway! For those that do not live on the North Shore, it is so easy to forget or not realise that the Ku-ring-gai area is on the other side of the forest when travelling along the M2. Epping and Ryde districts should not contain parts of the Ku-ring-gai area.

The Commission could consider that Oatley expands to the west to take in parts of Picnic Point, Revesby Heights and Padstow Heights.

This is a completely unnecessary change that sees a very clear physical boundary (Salt Pan Creek) breached. Oatley should not expand west.

This would leave about enough voters for a single district formed by combining Drummoyne and Strathfield.

There is no reason for radical changes to be made to Drummoyne. The existing boundaries are close to ideal and can be further improved upon simply by transferring more of Canada Bay LGA into it.

I generally agree with the Greens suggestions in relation to North West and South West Sydney, however, there is not a great amount of detail in their suggestion.

5.2 S34 (Liberal)

I am sure the Panel and other contributors will be aware of articles published by the Daily Telegraph concerning the Liberal Party suggestion. The articles reported a senior Liberal stating that the suggestion should be “framed around winning the next election”, a Liberal MP complaining that not enough was being done to make her seat more safe, and another Liberal MP threatening “World War III” if her seat was made more marginal. This is all a reminder that we should take political party suggestions with a grain of salt.

As discussed in Section 2.4, I am deeply concerned by the Liberal Party’s view in favour of “distributing high growth localities between as many electoral districts as feasible”, which will be devastating for the representation of these communities.

5.2.1 Sutherland and St George

The Liberal Party suggestion involves Miranda extending into the St George area. The radical changes in the St George area suggested by the Liberal Party are unnecessary. The existing boundaries are already close to ideal, and the shortfall in electors can be addressed by moving the districts slightly northwards. It is also unnecessary that of the

four districts containing parts of the Sutherland Shire, three of them also extend outside of the Sutherland Shire. In their comment on suggestions in the last federal redistribution, the Liberal Party presented this quote from the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre:

The Sutherland Shire is an integrated and dynamic unit with complex geographic, social, commercial, transport and recreational functions. It is highly distinctive within the Sydney Region. Bounded largely by rivers, bays and ocean, the Shire is understood best as a significant whole, rather than a random series of suburbs, for then its overall attractiveness and its many values are seen to increase the worth of every part.

I make the same case that the Liberal Party made then – that districts in the Sutherland Shire should, ideally, not extend outside of it. Due to numerical requirements, it is virtually impossible (and unfortunately so) to avoid having at least two of the four districts extending outside of it. The Panel should not push this any further.

I will give credit to the Liberal Party for suggesting that Bundeena and Maianbar be transferred to Cronulla. I encourage the Panel to consider this, but perhaps find clearer boundaries than those of the SSCs.

5.2.2 Central Sydney

The Liberal Party's suggestion to create a new Waverley district is an unnecessary radical change, and I am not convinced as to what its justification is. Many districts suggested in the Eastern Suburbs, Inner City, and Inner West are quite reasonable, but are no better than the existing boundaries. And there is one district that is significantly worsened – Sydney district. The Liberal Party have sought to move Waterloo into Sydney district before uniting all of Ultimo.

To defend their suggested Sydney district, the Liberal Party poses:

These [boundaries] reflect bus and (soon) metro rail linkages between these areas with central Sydney.

As if it is unusual for public transport routes to terminate in the CBD!

The Liberal Party themselves acknowledged in their suggestion for the last federal redistribution that the community of interest around Sydney CBD runs east-west.

The Liberal Party's suggestion does not significantly improve the existing boundaries of most districts in the Eastern Suburbs, Inner City, and Inner West, and significantly worsens the boundaries of Sydney district. The Panel should opt for a minimal approach to districts in this region.

The Liberal Party's suggestion is one of a few suggestions that proposes the abolition of Canterbury along with a trans-Bankstown-Fairfield district, which I discussed in Section 2.3.

5.2.3 South West Sydney

The Liberal Party's suggested Campbelltown is a poorly connected trans-Camden-Campbelltown district, with the boundary with Macquarie Fields cutting through the core Campbelltown area. Macquarie Fields need not extend so far south, and this appears to be an artefact of placing Glenfield in Holsworthy district.

5.2.4 Penrith and Blacktown

The Liberal Party's suggested Penrith and St Marys districts are quite reasonable. While it is a significant reconfiguration of this region, the communities of interest are still preserved and in some cases improved. The semirural areas in the north of Penrith LGA remain united. The Cambridges and Werringtons are united within St Marys. The 60s-70s public housing suburbs are united within Mount Druitt.

5.2.5 North West Sydney

I have very mixed feelings about the Liberal Party's suggested Hawkesbury and Galston districts. I concur that it is not unreasonable for Richmond and Windsor to be placed in the same district as Riverstone and Schofields. I considered this when preparing my suggestion, but could not find a good way of doing this that satisfies numerical requirements. To this end, the Liberal Party have taken out parts of Hawkesbury LGA in the southeast, which weakens this connection and results in a district with a rather peculiar shape.

The Liberal Party's Galston district at the very least does not leave half of Cherrybrook alone in an otherwise semirural district (confer Mr Mulcair's suggested Hawkesbury) – Westleigh and parts of Castle Hill and Pennant Hills are also located in Galston. It is also ideal for most the semirural Hills/Hornsby suburbs to be united within a single district. However, in the suggested Galston, a large part of Dural – the core suburb of this district – is missing. Also, Box Hill and Pitt Town really do not belong in this district at all, as they do not share a community of interest with the Cherrybrook area and tend to use completely different means of transport (e.g. the Richmond Line, Old Windsor Road) to the rest of the district.

The Liberal Party's suggested Baulkham Hills and Castle Hill districts are oddly shaped, but are an improvement on the existing boundaries – realigned to run north-south. It would be preferable if the area south of the M2 in Castle Hill could be removed, and if more of Baulkham Hills SSC could be transferred into Castle Hill.

Further east, I do not support the Liberal Party's suggestion in relation to Epping district. The area to the north of Pennant Hills should not be part of Epping district, and is hardly connected to the rest of the district. Epping does not need to extend into the Ku-ring-gai area. The M2 is the most significant boundary in this area, which is why Epping should be realigned to an east-west orientation.

On the whole, I am supportive of what the Liberal Party have suggested for the rest of Northern Sydney and the North Shore, which in many ways is quite similar to my own suggestion.

5.3 S35 (National)

5.3.1 Sutherland Shire

As I have stated in relation to other suggestions, the Panel should not be maintaining the status quo in the Sutherland Shire with both Heathcote and Miranda effectively discontinuous districts.

5.3.2 South West

The National Party poses an interesting idea – transfer parts of Wollondilly LGA to Mulgoa and parts of Camden to Wollondilly. While it would be ideal to leave Wollondilly largely unchanged, this exchange may help the Panel in drawing districts in the Macarthur region, as discussed in Section 2.5.

Bardia and Edmondson Park should be placed in the same district, given their similarities and with Edmondson Park station and Ed Square Town Centre uniting them.

It is worrying to see that Goulburn extends as far north as Bowral, with no other changes to the outer boundaries of Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury, or Hornsby, or the western boundaries of the Illawarra and South Coast districts. What this means is that the National Party suggestion involves a significant imbalance in electors between Sydney and non-Sydney districts.

5.3.3 Central Sydney

For the most part, the National Party’s suggestion in relation to the Eastern Suburbs, Inner City, and Inner West is quite reasonable. However, the changes to Maroubra involving a boundary zig-zagging through Eastlakes and Mascot are unnecessary.

The National Party’s suggestion involves the abolition of Lakemba and a Fairfield district that awkwardly snips off a small part of Fairfield SSC and the stretches almost as far east as the Bankstown CBD. See Section 2.3 for more on this.

5.3.4 Western and Northern Sydney

I approve of the National Party’s suggested Blacktown, Mount Druitt, Penrith, Riverstone and St Marys districts for similar reasons as for the Liberal Party’s suggestion.

As a resident of Rouse Hill, I strongly object to the National Party’s suggested Castle Hill district. See section 2.1 for more on this. This suggested Castle Hill is even worse than others as it removes a large part of Kellyville.

The National Party’s suggestion cleans up some of the boundaries around Epping, with North Rocks and West Pennant Hills removed from Baulkham Hills. The suggested Beecroft district is an improvement on the existing Epping, although North Epping

really should not be part of this district as the only road connections are from the south via Epping. The suggested Epping district is good but likely infeasible without the abolition of Ryde.

The National Party suggests abolishing Ryde. This is one of the last districts the Panel should consider abolishing. Residents of Ryde will be very upset by this. Ryde sees itself as having its own identity distinct from its neighbours. The proposed merger of Ryde and Lane Cove LGAs, and the proposal from Parramatta Council to annex half of Ryde LGA caused outrage among residents. The state government was forced to back down from any proposal involving changes to Ryde LGA.

Waddell's suggestion involved retaining Davidson, and in that suggestion, Ku-ring-gai was pushed into Hornsby LGA all the way to Westleigh. In the National Party's suggestion, they have Davidson push the other way, splitting the Chatswood CBD and leading to the abolition of Ryde. It is clear that the Panel needs to abolish Davidson to avoid complications elsewhere on the North Shore.

5.4 S40 (Labor)

5.4.1 Central Sydney

The Labor Party's suggestion involves effectively abolishing Canterbury, creating a new very oddly-shaped Earlwood district, and a trans-Bankstown-Fairfield Villawood district. See Section 2.5 for more on this.

5.4.2 Western Sydney

I cannot see any pressing need to transfer Marsden Park to Mount Druitt, especially when the suggested Mount Druitt does not contain Colebee or Ropes Crossing. It is unfair to have a small part of Westmead in Seven Hills district, so far away from and disconnected to the rest of the district. The boundary between Blacktown and Mount Druitt should be aligned to the M7. Aside from these, the Labor Party's suggestion in this region is quite reasonable.

5.4.3 South West

The Labor Party makes some very bizarre suggestions in this region. The suggested districts are highly irregular and non-compact in shape. Macquarie Fields is drawn as if to avoid Bardia when Bardia and Edmondson Park should be united within the same district. Minto slithers around the fringe of Campbelltown, and Campbelltown has a panhandle into Oran Park.

5.4.4 Northern Sydney

Cherrybrook has received the short end of the stick in a number of suggestions, but this far outdoes the rest of them. Cherrybrook does not belong in a Ku-ring-gai-based district, and is hardly connected to the rest of the suggested district.

Living in Cherrybrook, we never travelled *to* the Ku-ring-gai area, and the only time we travelled *through* it was on the rare occasion when we went to the beach. Unusually for residents in Cherrybrook, we often travelled to Westfield Hornsby. And yet we still never travelled to the Ku-ring-gai area. Cherrybrook to Chatswood also does not involve passing through the Ku-ring-gai area – Cherrybrook residents travel via the M2 or Epping Road.

As a resident of Rouse Hill, I strongly object to the Labor Party's suggested Annangrove district. See 2.1 for more on this.