

29 June 2020

The Secretariat of the Electoral Districts Redistribution Panel  
c/o NSW Electoral Commission  
GPO Box 832  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Commissioners

### **2020 redistribution – Suggestion for the Sydney Electorate**

I write to propose an adjustment of boundaries for the Sydney electorate.

The Sydney electorate shares its boundary with the electorates of Balmain, Heffron, Newtown and Vaucluse. These electorates, together with the electorates of Coogee and Maroubra form a discrete grouping for the purposes of this submission. I do not propose to suggest boundary changes for these electorates, other than where required by changes to the boundaries for the Sydney electorate.

#### **Malapportioned Electorates**

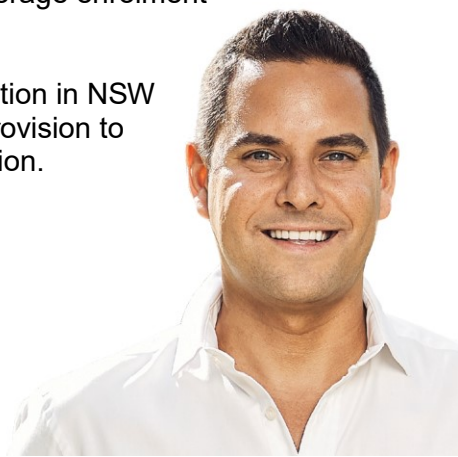
In proposing adjustments, I have taken into account the projected enrolments for these seven electorates, as shown in the table below, and the need to reduce the risk of continued malapportionment.

<b>District</b>	<b>Projected Enrolment 2023</b>	<b>% deviation from quota 2023</b>
Balmain	59054	-0.32
Coogee	55467	-6.38
Heffron	67334	13.66
Maroubra	57734	-2.55
Newtown	56886	-3.98
Sydney	56716	-4.27
Vaucluse	57445	-3.04
<b>Total</b>	<b>410636</b>	

Section 21(1) (a) of the Electoral Act requires the Commissioners to:

“... have regard to demographic trends within New South Wales and, as far as practicable, endeavour to ensure on the basis of those trends that, at the relevant future time, the number of electors enrolled in each electoral district will be equal (within a margin of allowance of 10 per cent more or less of the average enrolment in electoral districts at that future time).”

The intention of this section is to embody the principle of equal representation in NSW electoral law. Section 28A of the Constitution Act contains an additional provision to ensure that this principle is maintained at each Legislative Assembly election.



Section 28A requires a special electoral distribution if more than one quarter of the number of electorates has been malapportioned for a period of more than two months. An electorate is malapportioned if its total number of voters varies from the quota by more than five per cent.

One inner Sydney electorate, Heffron is projected to exceed the allowable deviation from the quota by 2023. Two electorates, Heffron and Coogee, are projected to be malapportioned within the meaning of Section 28A by 2023. Heffron has been continually malapportioned since June 2016 and with an enrolment of 61,528 as June 2020, deviates from the quota by 7.31 per cent. Projections provided by the NSW Electoral Commission estimate enrolments will grow by a further 5,806 by 2023.

Heffron includes the Green Square urban renewal area, which, according to the map on the City of Sydney website covers parts of the suburbs of Alexandria, Beaconsfield, Rosebery, Waterloo and Zetland. The City of Sydney estimates that 61,000 people will live in Green Square by 2030.

The total enrolment of SA1s within the Green Square urban renewal area is currently 10,368 and projected to be 12,045 by 2023, an increase of 1,677. According to the City of Sydney's Residential Monitor, 2,032 residential dwellings were either under construction or planned as at 30 June 2019 within the Green Square Urban Renewal area. These dwellings are likely to be completed and occupied by the 2023 NSW election. A further 1,371 dwellings are either under construction or planned in the suburbs of Alexandria and Erskineville within the Heffron electorate.

Given this, it is possible the projected enrolments for the Heffron electorate may be underestimated. I encourage the commissioners to consider this possibility to avoid the risk of Heffron becoming malapportioned following the completion of the redistribution.

### **Suggestion for the Sydney Electorate**

The redistribution provides an opportunity to reunite the suburb of Surry Hills within the one electorate, in accordance with the criteria for redistributions set out in Section 21 (1) (b) of the Electoral Act 2017. Section 21 (1) (b) requires the commissioners to give due consideration, inter alia to:

- community of interests within the electoral district, including economic, social and regional interests,
- means of communication and travel within the electoral district
- the physical features and area of the electoral district,
- mountain and other natural boundaries, and
- the boundaries of the existing electoral districts.

Community of interests is the common interests of residents within a particular neighbourhood, locality or electoral district which may result from:

- shared values, lifestyle choices, aspirations or priorities of those residents;
- shared cultural aspirations, customs, traditions, language or history;

- shared experiences resulting from the social, physical, natural and/or humanly created environment in which they live;
- common needs or aspirations.

Surry Hills has clear main road boundaries with Elizabeth Street and Chalmers Street and the railway line to the west, Cleveland Street to the south, South Dowling Street and the parklands to the east, and Oxford Street to the north. Within these major roads Surry Hills has a village atmosphere with strong social connections among neighbours and a strong sense of community.

The Surry Hills community has similar interests to Darlinghurst and Paddington within the Sydney electorate. All three suburbs include large areas of terrace houses with pockets of medium rise apartments. Together with Darlinghurst and Potts Point, Surry Hills shares a strong gay and lesbian community and Surry Hills has long had strong social links with Darlinghurst, symbolically marked with the same postcode.

Surry Hills residents are serviced by the Surry Hills Local Area Command (LAC), the Surry Hills Library and Community Centre, and the retail outlets, cafes and restaurants on Crown Street. These services are currently divided between the electorates of Sydney and Newtown, as a result of arbitrary boundaries at Foveaux and Fitzroy streets established prior to the 2015 NSW election. I am not aware of any state government agencies that divide Surry Hills in this way, and agencies such as NSW Health use Cleveland Street as the boundary.

Under the current boundaries, the Surry Hills Police Centre is located within the Sydney electorate, while the Surry Hills Library and Community Centre is within the Newtown electorate. The Crown Street retail areas are divided between the Sydney and Newtown electorates.

This arbitrary boundary has created confusion for Surry Hills residents. Residents who live south of Foveaux and Fitzroy Streets have continued to contact my office and are confused and dismayed when they are told they live in the Newtown electorate, which is some suburbs away and divided from Surry Hills by the railway line.

The maps published in The Electoral Atlas of New South Wales 1856-2006 suggest that the whole of Surry Hills has been contained within one electorate at every redistribution since 1970, with the exception of the redistribution prior to the 2015 election.

The catchment area of the Inner Sydney High School located on Cleveland Street includes all of Surry Hills and the whole of Surry Hills is represented federally in the Commonwealth seat of Sydney and locally by the City of Sydney Council.

***I therefore propose restoring the part of Surry Hills south of Foveaux and Fitzroy streets to the Sydney electorate, as shown in the following table:***

<b>SA1s proposed for transfer from Newtown to Sydney</b>					
	<b>Enrolment</b>			<b>Enrolment</b>	
<b>SA1</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>SA1</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2023</b>
1133601	0	0	1133628	401	411
1133602	334	346	1133629	139	135
1133604	529	593	1133630	290	295
1133605	323	327	1133631	272	284
1133606	366	374	1133632	275	274
1133607	221	215	1133633	241	248
1133608	239	239	1133634	331	332
1133609	512	520	1133635	162	153
1133623	161	159	1133636	379	393
1133626	247	244	1133637	198	205
			1133638	246	258
<b>Total enrolments all SA1s</b>				<b>5866</b>	<b>6005</b>

SA1 113601 has no enrolled voters as it covers Prince Alfred Park, the Cathedral of The Annunciation of Our Lady and the Inner Sydney High School. It is appropriate that this SA1 is included in the Sydney electorate as it is wholly within Surry Hills and it is appropriate that its western edge forms part of the electorate's south-western boundary. Section 21 (1) (b) (iv) requires the commissioners to give due consideration to natural boundaries.

To avoid a resulting malapportionment, I propose a further adjustment to Sydney's eastern boundary. The suburbs of Edgecliff and Woollahra are currently divided between the Sydney and Vaucluse electorates. I propose uniting them within the Vaucluse electorate with which they have strong community of interests as shown in the following table:

<b>SA1s proposed for transfer from Sydney to Vaucluse</b>		
1134701	418	431
1134702	390	396
1134703	204	213
1134712	298	292
1134713	301	320
1134310	120	120
1134326	191	197
1134327	366	368
1134328	334	346
<b>Total</b>	<b>2622</b>	<b>2683</b>

As shown in the following table, these adjustments would result in a Sydney electorate with a projected enrolment of 60,038 in 2023, with a deviation from the 59,244 quota of 1.34 per cent:

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2023</b>
Sydney	55296	56716
Plus transfer from Newtown	5866	6005
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>61162</b>	<b>62721</b>
Less transfer to Vacluse	2622	2683
<b>New Sydney</b>	<b>58540</b>	<b>60038</b>

This proposal would provide the commissioners with the flexibility to adjust the boundary between Newtown and Heffron to address Heffron's malapportionment. The boundaries of the Vacluse, Coogee and Heffron electorates could also be adjusted to address Coogee's projected malapportionment.

Yours sincerely,



**Member for Sydney**