

**Submission ID:** O-0721  
**Date Received:** 9/4/26, 4:43 pm  
**Name:** Amber Rodgers  
**Organisation Name:** Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce Inc.  
**Submission Topic:** Electorate Boundaries  
**Electoral District:** Burnett

**Submission:**

I write as Chair of Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce (DCTC), representing local businesses, tourism operators, and the broader community of Agnes Water and the Town of 1770.

I would like to respectfully express our concern regarding the proposed inclusion of Agnes Water and 1770 within the Callide electorate. From a practical and lived perspective, our communities are not aligned with inland centres such as Biloela, Monto, or Gayndah. Instead, our day-to-day lives, service access, and economic connections are strongly oriented toward the coastal Burnett region, particularly Bundaberg and surrounding areas.

Residents of Agnes Water and 1770 routinely travel south for health care, education, retail, and essential services. Our businesses operate within coastal tourism networks, and our economy is driven by the visitor economy, not inland agriculture or resource industries. We are a small but growing coastal community with a distinct identity and set of priorities. Being placed within a large inland electorate risks reducing the visibility of those priorities and limiting effective representation.

This is particularly important at a time when our region is experiencing growth and increasing recognition as part of the Southern Great Barrier Reef tourism corridor. Electoral boundaries should reflect how communities function in practice. In our case, that reality is clearly coastal, connected, and south-oriented.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 remain within the Burnett electorate. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this important process.

Yours sincerely,  
Amber Rodgers

**Submission Attachments**

Submission to the Queensland Redistribution Commission Proposed Electoral  
Boundary Changes – Inclusion of Agnes Water & 1770 in Callide.pdf



Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce Inc. (DCTC)

ABN: 55 170 696 950

The local tourism organisation for Agnes Water, 1770  
& surrounding towns of the Southern Great Barrier Reef  
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**Date:** 9 April, 2026

**To:** Queensland Redistribution Commission

**Submitted by:** Amber Rodgers, President, Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce (DCTC)

**RE: Proposed Electoral Boundary Changes – Inclusion of Agnes Water & 1770 in Callide**

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## 1. Purpose of Submission

Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 represent a significant coastal tourism economy and community within the Southern Great Barrier Reef region.

This submission is made on behalf of Discovery Coast Tourism & Commerce (DCTC) in response to the proposed electoral redistribution, specifically the removal of Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 from the Burnett electorate and their inclusion in the Callide electorate.

DCTC represents the local business and tourism community and provides this submission based on economic data, regional alignment, and strong community feedback.

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## 2. Summary Position

DCTC does not support the proposed boundary change.

We respectfully submit that Agnes Water and 1770:

- Are intrinsically aligned with the Burnett coastal region
- Share strong economic, social, and service-based connections to the south
- Would be misaligned within an inland-focused electorate such as Callide

We recommend that the Commission retain Agnes Water and 1770 within the Burnett electorate.

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### 3. Acknowledgement of Redistribution Constraints

The Commission's task in achieving electoral equality is recognised, including the need to address enrolment shortfalls in electorates such as Callide.

However, while the redistribution must satisfy quota requirements, the Electoral Act requires that this be balanced with genuine community of interest, communication patterns, and geographic cohesion.

This submission demonstrates that the inclusion of Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 does not satisfy these criteria and is not the most appropriate solution to address enrolment in Callide.

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### 4. Community of Interest (Primary Consideration)

Electoral boundaries should reflect genuine communities of interest.

Agnes Water and 1770 are:

- Coastal communities
- Tourism-driven economies
- Socially and economically linked to:
  - Bundaberg
  - Bargara
  - Fraser Coast

These links are evident through:

- Visitor markets
- Business supply chains
- Workforce movement
- Regional branding and tourism networks

This reflects a clear “functional community of interest” as defined by the Electoral Act, supported by established travel patterns, service access, and economic integration. These connections are coastal and corridor-based, not inland-facing.



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## 5. Economic Alignment

Agnes Water and 1770 are a tourism-led regional economy, not an inland resource-based economy. Key tourism metrics (Source: Tourism Research Australia, Visitor Statistics, Year Ending December 2024) highlight the scale and regional importance of the local visitor economy:

- 347,000 visitors annually
- \$178 million in visitor expenditure
- Approximately 2,550 jobs supported

This economic profile aligns strongly with coastal tourism regions such as Burnett and Fraser Coast, as well as established visitor economy planning and infrastructure frameworks.

It does not align with the dominant economic drivers of the Callide electorate, which are agriculture, mining, and inland regional services.

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## 6. Service Access and Travel Patterns

A critical factor in defining a community of interest is how residents access services.

Local evidence and established service patterns demonstrate that the majority of residents travel south (Bundaberg region) for:

- Health services
- Education
- Retail and commercial services

Residents do not regularly travel inland to:

- Biloela
- Monto
- Gayndah



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These locations are:

- Further in travel time
- Not service-aligned
- Not part of regular community interaction

These established travel and communication patterns align directly with the Commission's requirement to consider "ways of communication and travel within proposed electoral districts" and strongly support continued alignment with coastal electorates.

These established patterns demonstrate that Agnes Water and 1770 function as part of a coastal service network rather than an inland regional system.

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## 7. Geographic and Physical Alignment

The proposed inclusion in Callide creates a clear geographic inconsistency. Agnes Water and 1770 would be the only coastal communities within an otherwise predominantly inland electorate.

This results in:

- A lack of physical cohesion
- Limited shared infrastructure priorities
- Reduced alignment in planning and policy focus

Agnes Water and 1770 sit within the Gladstone Regional Council area, which maintains strong economic, tourism, and service linkages with coastal Queensland regions. While local government boundaries are not determinative, the Commission has recognised their relevance in reflecting communities of interest.

Aligning these communities with an inland electorate would further fragment regional cohesion and planning alignment.



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## 8. Representation Considerations

Including Agnes Water and 1770 in Callide would:

- Place a small coastal population within a large inland electorate
- Reduce visibility of:
  - Tourism infrastructure needs
  - Coastal access priorities
  - Visitor economy advocacy

This would limit the effectiveness of representation for a tourism-dependent coastal community within a predominantly inland electorate.

This is particularly relevant given existing challenges in ensuring appropriate prioritisation of coastal tourism communities within broader regional decision-making frameworks

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## 9. Strategic Timing and State Significance

This proposed change comes at a critical time for regional Queensland, including alignment with statewide priorities to grow regional tourism dispersal and maximise the economic benefits of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Implementation of Queensland's long-term Destination 2045 strategy

Agnes Water and 1770 represent:

- A high-growth tourism corridor
- A key access point to the Southern Great Barrier Reef

Maintaining alignment with a coastal electorate will support:

- Stronger advocacy
- Better infrastructure outcomes
- Coordinated tourism development





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On balance, the proposed change does not reflect the established community of interest for Agnes Water and the Town of 1770. Appropriate electoral alignment will be critical to ensuring the region can fully contribute to, and benefit from, these statewide opportunities.

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## 10. Consequences of the Proposed Change

If implemented, the proposed boundary change would:

- Disconnect the region from its natural economic and service alignment
- Dilute effective representation of a coastal tourism community
- Reduce alignment with regional planning, tourism, and infrastructure priorities

This creates a risk of misaligned infrastructure prioritisation, reduced advocacy effectiveness, and slower economic growth at a critical time for regional Queensland.

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## 11. Alternative Consideration

The Commission has previously noted that objections were raised following the 2017 redistribution regarding boundary decisions within the Callide electorate. The current proposal reflects similar structural challenges, with Callide continuing to experience below-average enrolment and projected decline. This indicates that expanding inland electorates into less aligned communities has not resolved the underlying issue and risks repeating the same outcome—creating electorates that are numerically compliant but functionally misaligned.

If adjustments to electoral boundaries are required to address enrolment in Callide, we respectfully submit that alternative areas with stronger inland alignment should be considered.

The inclusion of a coastal tourism community that is functionally and economically aligned with the Burnett region does not represent the optimal solution when assessed against the criteria of community of interest, communication patterns, and geographic cohesion.



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We encourage the Commission to consider options that maintain the integrity of coastal communities while addressing enrolment requirements within more closely aligned inland regions.

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## 12. Recommendation

DCTC strongly recommends that:

### **Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 remain within the Burnett electorate**

This ensures:

- Alignment with genuine community of interest
  - Continuity of service access and infrastructure planning
  - Strong representation of a tourism-driven coastal economy
- 

## Conclusion

Agnes Water and 1770 are coastal, tourism-led communities with clear economic and service alignment to the Burnett region. Electoral boundaries should reflect how communities function in practice. The proposed boundary change would create an outcome that is administratively convenient but functionally misaligned with how this community lives, works, and contributes to the Queensland economy.

While recognising the Commission's obligation to achieve electoral equality, this submission demonstrates that the proposed inclusion of Agnes Water and the Town of 1770 in Callide does not satisfy the broader statutory criteria.

Retaining these communities within the Burnett electorate ensures appropriate representation, alignment, and long-term regional outcomes.