

Submission ID: CS-0463
Date Received: 22/9/25, 4:29 pm
Name: Cr Barry Hughes
Organisation Name: Etheridge Shire Council
Submission Topic: Electorate Boundaries and Names
Electoral District: Traeger
Related Submissions:

Submission:

See below



ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL

...The Golden Heart of the Gulf

Our ref: QRCSUB/0925/KT:rb

22nd September 2025

Queensland Redistribution Commission
GPO Box 1393
BRISBANE QLD 4001
Via email: QRCSUBMISSIONS@ecq.qld.gov.au

To whom it may concern

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE QUEENSLAND REDISTRIBUTION COMMISSION – ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES REVIEW

Etheridge Shire Council thanks the Queensland Redistribution Commission for the opportunity to comment on its proposal for the redistribution of the State's electoral districts.

We concur that, with the changing demographics within the State, it is timely to revisit electoral district boundaries. Whilst acknowledging that it is outside the legislated scope and purpose of the Queensland Redistribution Commission, Council considers it important to note that population parity alone does not ensure equitable representation in Queensland's extensive remote areas. Methodologies based solely on population create electorates that are equal numerically but can leave constituents in remote areas with limited access to their elected representatives, reducing the effectiveness of political representation.

The significant size of remote electorates makes it difficult for MPs to meaningfully engage with constituents, maintain awareness of local issues, and effectively convey government policy and programs back to their communities. This disparity is compounded by the increasing demands on elected members to service diverse and geographically dispersed communities. Council also notes that the extensive travel requirements associated with these electorates have implications for MPs' work/life balance and may affect the attraction and retention of high-calibre candidates.

Given these factors, Council believes that remote electorates would be better served by boundaries aligned along common East-West axes, reflecting connectedness via major road infrastructure and shared economic, social, and regional development interests. In Etheridge's context, the Savannah Way provides the primary East-West corridor linking communities to regional service centres and economic hubs.

Council proposes that the Gulf Shires — including Burke, Mornington, Doomadgee, Carpentaria (excluding the portion in Cook), Croydon, and Etheridge — be included in an electorate aligned with this East-West polarity. This alignment would improve the accessibility and effectiveness of political representation while maintaining cohesive social, economic, and administrative linkages across these communities.

Factors supporting this recommendation include:

- Regional freight, logistics, and transport services for the Gulf Shires primarily operate along the Savannah Way corridor to the Tablelands and Far North Queensland coast.
- Residents of the Gulf Shires frequently access professional, retail, and community services along this corridor rather than southwards, reflecting social and economic connections.
- Key industries, including cattle grazing, tourism, mining, and fisheries, are integrated with markets and support services along the East-West corridor, reinforcing economic cohesion.

Regarding the naming of electorates, Council suggests the name MacDonald, in recognition of John Graham MacDonald (1834–1918), whose exploration, pastoral development, and public service significantly contributed to the development of the Gulf region, including Etheridge Shire.

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In conclusion, Council reiterates that the Gulf Local Government Areas of Burke, Mornington, Doomadgee, Carpentaria (excluding the portion in Cook), Croydon, and Etheridge are best served by inclusion in an electorate that follows an East-West polarity aligned with the Savannah Way. This approach ensures effective and equitable political representation, reflecting the social, economic, and administrative linkages of these communities.



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