



## SHIRE OF DENMARK

953 South Coast Highway (PO Box 183), Denmark WA 6333

Ph: (08) 9848 0300 Fax: (08) 9848 1985

Email: [enquiries@denmark.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@denmark.wa.gov.au)

Website: [www.denmark.wa.gov.au](http://www.denmark.wa.gov.au)

WAEC

- 8 MAY 2015

# Electoral Boundaries WA 2015

## SUBMISSION

The Shire of Denmark makes the following submission in relation to the current review of the Electoral Boundaries for Western Australia.

The Shire of Denmark is aware that the Electorate of Warren-Blackwood is a fast growing electorate and there is a need for the Electoral Commission to ensure that all electorates within Western Australian are within acceptable elector number quotient parameters.

The Shire of Denmark has been within the electorate of Warren-Blackwood, formerly named Warren-Stirling with slightly amended boundaries, for many years and retains a high degree of community of interest with the other local government districts within the Electorate. It is however aware that Denmark is on the south eastern edge of the Electorate and the Commission, as with every review, will need to look at boundary adjustments that retain an acceptable quota.

In this regard the Shire of Denmark makes a submission strongly advocating for retention of its complete district within the Warren-Blackwood Electorate as opposed to, for example, being arbitrarily hived off to another electorate, such as the adjoining electorate of Wagin.

It is our strong view that the residents would not accept any such proposition as it would be tantamount to the district of Peppermint Grove being aligned with that of Mundaring. Such is the analogy that Denmark may be combined with the electorate of Wagin.

Wagin and its local government districts comprised within, have very similar land use, geographic and indeed demographic attributes. They are generally all predominately declining or at least static populations, are grain and sheep production and broad acre properties, all have relatively low rainfall and a warm and dry climate, are all inland with no coastal or major tourism dynamics and are all relatively small urban populations that service their adjoining rural farming communities.

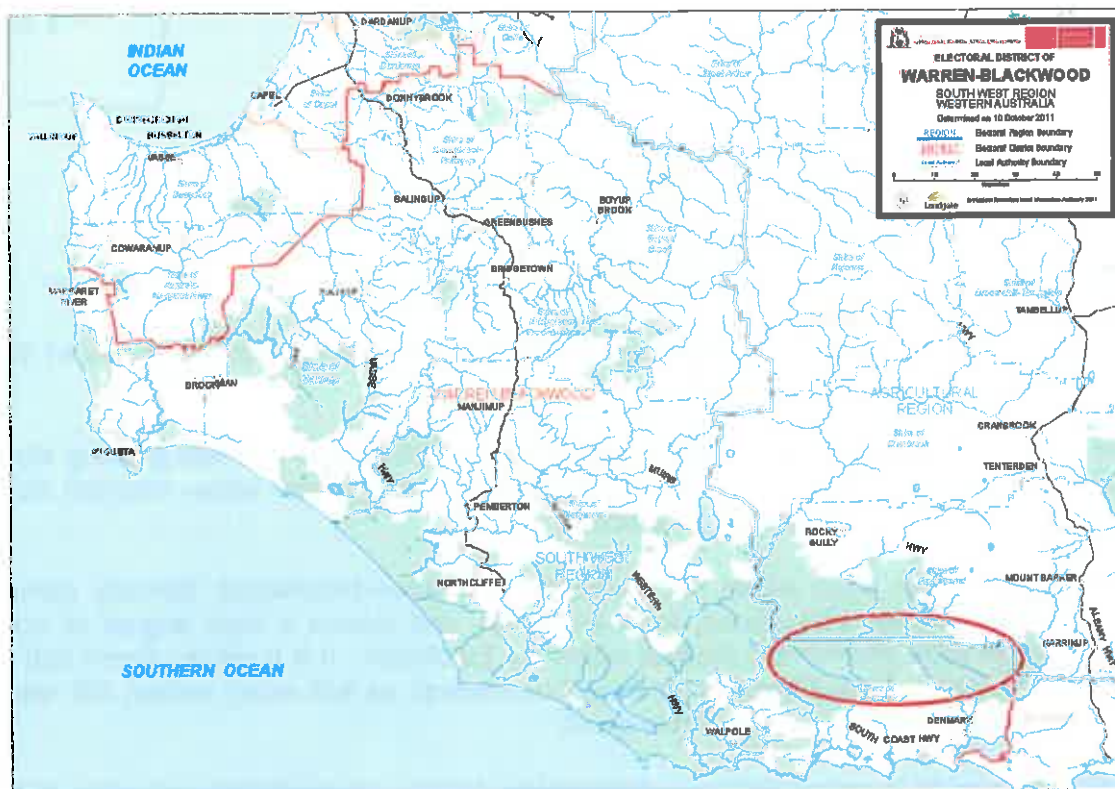
Conversely, the district of Denmark is very different to this. It is a coastal community with 73% of its land form State or National Forest, its economy relying on hospitality and tourism, is growing at a long term average of 2% per annum, has a large urban centre, very high rainfall and lots surrounding the urban township are utilised by hobby farmers and smaller lifestyle lots for intensive agricultural, viticultural and tourism pursuits.

Indeed, we have very strong similarity of population, demographic, economic and landform attributes to our existing districts within the Warren-Blackwood Electorate, perhaps with the exception of Boyup Brook who, arguably, would be far more similar with the Wagin district.

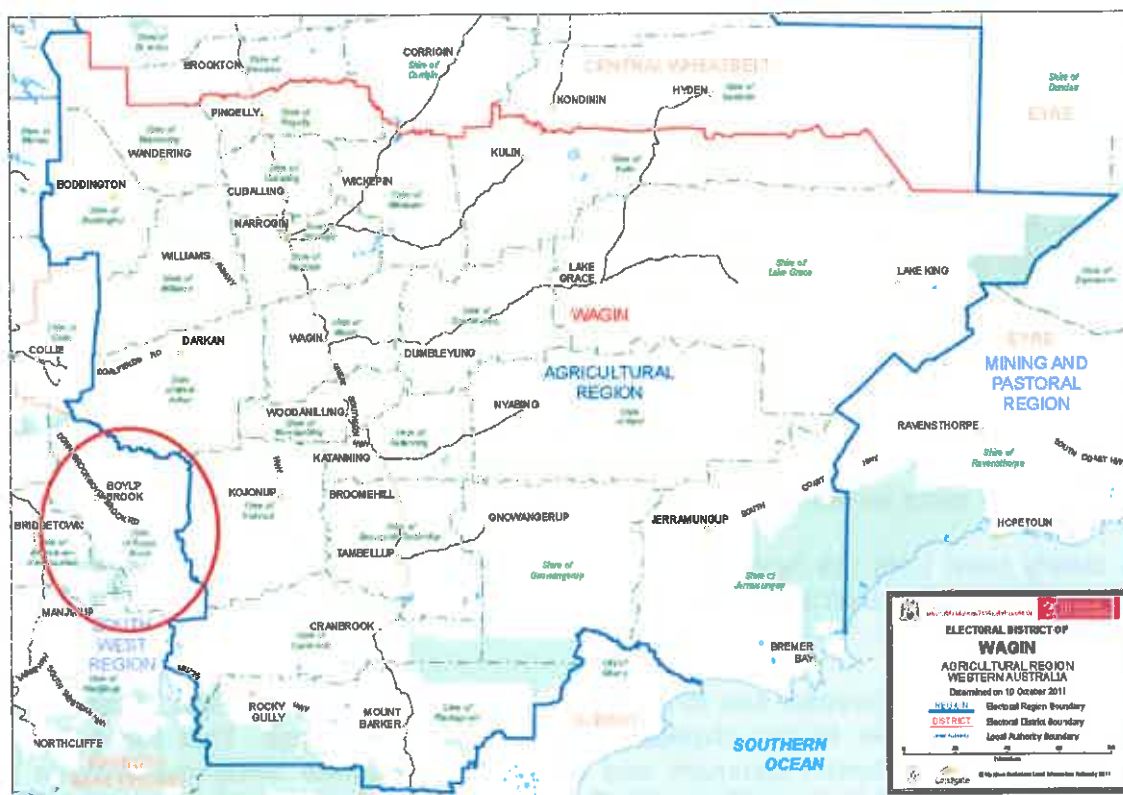
As can be clearly seen from the below Electoral Commission images, the topographic and vegetation layers within the Warren-Blackwood Electorate are very similar to each other (with the exception of Boyup Brook).

Conversely, if the district of Denmark was to be adjoined to the electorate of Wagin, it can be clearly seen that there is a natural barrier to our physical and social connectedness. That being the quite large vegetation buffer formed between Denmark and the Wagin Electorate being the Walpole Wilderness (comprising the Mt Frankland National Parks, Mt Roe National Park and the Mt Lindesay National Park).

This substantive green vegetation barrier can clearly be seen immediately to the north of the urban and cleared portions of the district of Denmark below in red outline.



Similarly, one can clearly see in the below image supplied by the WA Electoral Commission, the lack of commonality of interest that would be caused if the district of Denmark was included in the electorate of Wagin. The quite marked differences in landform and topographic and vegetative features are clear; again with the exception of the district of Boyup Brook which has little uncleared forestry land and/or National Park within its boundaries (in red outline).



Notwithstanding that the district of Denmark is within the Great Southern Development Commission, its residents and community are far more closely aligned with the adjoining districts of the South West Development Commission land area including the adjoining district of Manjimup. The district of Denmark includes the substantive and iconic Department of Parks and Wildlife services owned and operated Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk, which has the same tall timber and tourism attributes as its immediate neighbour of the community of Walpole and the district of Manjimup. The district of Wagin and many other of the other districts within that electorate on the other hand are within the Wheatbelt Development Commission. Wagin as a district indeed is renowned as being the home of the giant ram – a major wheat and sheep growing district within the electorate. In Denmark - there wouldn't be one hectare of wheat grown and sheep are few and far between and very, very few rams (if any)!

It simply is not synonymous with the Wagin electorate.

Any suggestions that the district of Denmark would have greater symbiotic relationship or any greater community of interest at all with those districts within the electorate of Wagin is, again, akin to suggesting Peppermint Grove should have such a community of interest with the residents of Mundaring. One is very urban, modern, compact, urban streets and chic and the other - the peri-urban divide between rural and metropolitan.

Should the Commission seriously be entertaining any submissions to redistribute the district of Denmark to the electorate of Wagin then it would ask that Commission Officers make further enquiries with Officers or the elected body at the Shire of Denmark prior to making such a determination.

Further information confirming the demographics, geographic and land use attributes of the district of Denmark are contained within the Council's adopted Local Planning Strategy (2011), a copy of which is available to download from our website at <http://www.denmark.wa.gov.au/localplanningstrategy>.

For further information please contact the undersigned.



Dale Stewart  
Chief Executive Officer

8 May 2015