

Our Ref: GV.EL.6: MB

1 May 2023



The Electoral Distribution Commissioners

Via email: boundaries@waec.wa.gov.au

Dear Commissioners,

I write on behalf of the Ravensthorpe Shire Council seeking your support for the retention of the current 16 regional seats as part of the consideration of electoral boundary changes in regional Western Australia.

The Shire of Ravensthorpe is a remote regional community located 530kms south east from Perth in WA and about half way between the City of Albany and Shire of Esperance.

The Shire includes the townships of Ravensthorpe, Hopetoun, Munglinup, Jerdacuttup and Fitzgerald with the main population centres of Hopetoun (1,115 residents) and Ravensthorpe (580) collectively accounting for 81% of the Shire's total population of 2,089 local residents (ABS 2021 Census).

Set within the Fitzgerald Biosphere (one of only 738 UNESCO recognised biosphere reserves in the world) the Shire includes some 600,000 hectares of native vegetation, including the Fitzgerald National Park. Much of this bushland is highly prized and boasts unique biodiversity values found nowhere else in the world.

The Ravensthorpe district is also currently undergoing strong economic growth generated from mining activity, agriculture and a growing tourism sector. Mining leads this growth with an estimated \$1.2B in mineral wealth extracted from the Ravensthorpe local government area in 2021/22 and ranking the Shire 12th across WA's local government authorities in terms of mineral value output (source DMIRS). Agriculture also continues to generate significant value to the WA economy with highly successful growing seasons experienced over recent times.

Ravensthorpe punches well above its weight in terms of gross regional product based on its 2,089 local residents, an impressive per capita figure of \$279,793 vs the WA benchmark of \$152,049 (source ABS).

Ensuring appropriate representation in Parliament for regional communities such as ours is considered essential to continue to deliver these significant economic benefits to the WA economy whilst also ensuring the liveability issues of remote regions such as ours are identified and addressed.

Maintaining the current 16 regional seats is strongly supported by the Ravensthorpe community. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matthew Bird".

Matthew Bird
Chief Executive Officer

cc: The Hon Shelley Payne MLC
Member for the Agricultural Region
shelley.payne@mp.wa.gov.au

Mr Peter Rundle MLA
Member for Roe
peter.rundle@mp.wa.gov.au