

Local council electoral structure review

# Preliminary Report

Wyndham City Council

November 2023

### Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges the Bunurong and Wadawurrung peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters for which it is holding this review and pays respects to ancestors and Elders past, present and emerging. The panel acknowledges their custodianship for many thousands of years and their continuing living culture.

### Report approval

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1	24 October 2023	Ms Julie Eisenbise
1	25 October 2023	Mr Tim Presnell
1	24 October 2023	Ms Dana Fleming

### Version approval

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## Executive summary

An electoral structure review panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government is reviewing the electoral structure of Wyndham City Council.

The purpose of the review is to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council.

Under Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Wyndham City Council must now have a single-councillor ward electoral structure.

The panel is looking at:

- the appropriate number of councillors and wards for the council
- the location of ward boundaries
- appropriate ward names.

This report outlines the preliminary models the panel is presenting for public consultation, for the proposed new electoral structure of Wyndham City Council to meet the requirements of the Act.

More information about the background to the review is available on [page 6](#).

## Developing electoral structure models

The panel considered a range of factors when deciding on the models in this report, including:

- research and analysis
- voter growth or decline over time.

More information on the way the panel decided on the models is available on [page 7](#).

## Electoral structure models

After considering research and the requirements of the Act, the panel is presenting the following electoral structure models for public consultation:

- Model 1: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1.

Details on these models, including maps, are available in [Appendix 1](#).

## Next steps

The panel is now seeking feedback on the preliminary electoral structure models. You can make a response submission to the preliminary models until 5 pm Wednesday 22 November 2023. If any response submitters wish to speak at a public hearing, the panel will hold an online public hearing on Tuesday 28 November 2023. Following this, the panel will present its final recommendation to the Minister on Wednesday 24 January 2024.

More information about the review process is available on the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au)

## Background

### About the 2023–24 electoral structure reviews

In October 2022, the Minister for Local Government formed 2 electoral representation advisory panels to review and provide advice on the electoral structures of 39 local councils, under section 16 of the Act. If the Minister accepts the electoral structure recommended by the panel, any changes are expected to take effect at the October 2024 local council elections.

The Act introduced several changes to local government representation, including the types of electoral structures local councils may have. All metropolitan, interface and regional city councils (including Wyndham City Council) must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

For Wyndham City Council, the panel is examining:

- the number of councillors and wards
- where the ward boundaries should be
- the name of each ward.

The Act requires electoral structures to provide fair and equitable representation and facilitate good governance. Each ward must have an approximately equal number of voters per councillor (within +/-10% of the average). While conducting the review, the panel also notes the role of a councillor as specified under section 28 of the Act.

### The electoral representation advisory panel

The panel conducting the electoral structure review of Wyndham City Council has 3 members:

- Ms Julie Eisenbise (Chairperson)
- Mr Tim Presnell
- Deputy Electoral Commissioner Ms Dana Fleming.

The purpose of the review is to advise the Minister on the appropriate number of councillors and electoral structure, including ward names, for the council. The panel is independent of councils and the VEC.

Under the Act, the VEC is not responsible for reviewing council electoral structures but must provide administrative and technical support to the panel. The Electoral Commissioner (or their nominated representative) must be a member of each panel.

## Public engagement

### Public information program

On behalf of the panel, the VEC conducts a public information and awareness program to inform the public about the Wyndham City Council electoral structure review. This includes:

- printed public notices in state-wide newspapers

- public information sessions to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- a media release to announce the start of the review
- information on social media channels
- website content on [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au), including:
  - current information on the review process
  - fact sheets for each council under review and a submission guide.

Wyndham City Council was also offered and took up 2 optional methods to promote the reviews:

- social media advertisements targeted at the council area
- notifying voters in the council area subscribed to the VEC's VoterAlert service about the start of the review and release of the preliminary report.

### **Public consultation**

The panel now invites input to the electoral structure review of Wyndham City Council via:

- response submissions to this preliminary report
- an online public hearing for anyone who makes a response submission to speak to the panel and expand on their submission.

Public submissions are an important part of the review process and are considered alongside other factors addressed during the review. These are outlined below.

## **Developing recommendations**

The electoral structure models the panel is presenting in this preliminary report comply with the Act and were developed through careful consideration of:

- research and analysis conducted by the VEC support team, including geospatial and demographic data
- rates or patterns of population and voter change over time, and relevant forecasts of growth or decline based on forecast information provided by .id (informed decisions, a company specialising in demographics and forecasting).

### **Deciding on the number of councillors**

The Act allows local councils to have between 5 and 12 councillors, but neither the Act nor the Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 specify how to determine the appropriate number of councillors. Therefore, the models put forward by the panel in this report are guided by the Act's intention for fairness and equity in voter representation.

In examining the appropriate number of councillors for Wyndham City Council, the panel considered the following criteria:

- the population and number of voters in the council area, compared to other councils with a similar population size and number of voters in the same category (for example, other comparable metropolitan, interface or regional city councils)
- patterns of population change and voter growth or decline in the council area over time
- the current and past numbers of councillors
- the representation needs of the communities of interest in the council area.

The panel's final recommendation will also consider any matters raised in public response submissions not already listed above.

Local councils with a larger number of voters will often have more councillors. Large populations generally have greater diversity, both in the type and number of communities of interest and issues relating to representation. However, the ideal number of councillors can also be influenced by the circumstances of each council, such as the:

- nature and complexity of services the council provides
- geographic size and topography of the area
- forecast population and voter growth or decline
- social diversity.

### **Deciding the electoral structure**

Under the Act, regional city, metropolitan and interface councils must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

When developing single-councillor ward models for Wyndham City Council, the panel considered these criteria:

- whether the structure would comply with section 15(2) of the Act (see below), and for how long it would likely comply
- the appropriate number of councillors, as outlined above
- whether meaningful and effective ward boundaries could be established and whether these would be easily identifiable to local communities
- the representation of communities of interest
- the voter distribution and physical features of the area, and the impact these may have on the shape and size of wards
- past elections for the council, including:
  - numbers of candidates nominating
  - incidences of uncontested elections
  - rates of informal voting.

The panel's final recommendation will also consider any matters raised in public response submissions not already listed above.



Under section 15(2) of the Act, subdivided structures must aim for an approximately equal number of voters per councillor in each ward. This means the number of voters represented by each councillor in a ward should be within +/-10% of the average number of voters per councillor for all wards.

During this review, the panel aims to recommend a structure that will comply with section 15(2) at the time of the 2024 local council elections and, if possible, also comply based on voter numbers at the time the review is conducted. The panel uses forecasts of population and voter change to assess compliance at the 2024 elections with as much accuracy as possible. In some cases, population change and other factors impacting voter numbers mean it is not possible to create compliant subdivided structures based both on voter numbers that were current at the time of the review and forecast voter numbers. In these instances, the panel prioritises compliance at the 2024 local government elections to ensure each vote will have approximately equal value at the 2024 election.

One of the factors that may impact compliance with section 15(2) is the number of current and forecast voters with ratepayer-based voting entitlements, also known as council-enrolled electors. Voters' rolls include both state-enrolled electors (the majority of the roll) and a smaller number of council-enrolled electors. The Act introduced changes to ratepayer-based entitlement categories, which come into full effect at the 2024 local council elections. The panel will take this change to the makeup of voters' rolls, and therefore compliance with section 15(2) of the Act, into consideration during this review.

### **Deciding on ward names**

The panel takes the following approach to naming wards:

1. The panel retains existing ward names if these are still relevant to the area covered by the ward.
2. When a new name is required, the panel bases this on features such as:
  - places (registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*) in the ward
  - compass directions
  - native flora or fauna.

### **Use of Aboriginal language**

The panel recognises that there should be meaningful consultation with local Aboriginal communities and groups before a ward is named using Aboriginal language. Meaningful consultation is a significant process that the panel is not able to undertake within the timeframes of the current review program.

The panel also recognises that many of the place names in current use across Victoria are based on Aboriginal language. As such, the panel may put forward new ward names using Aboriginal language if:

- it is the name of a place within a ward

- it is currently in common use

and

- the name is registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.

Unregistered names using Aboriginal language have not been put forward by the panel as new ward names. While the panel supports the adoption of names based on Aboriginal language, this requires appropriate consultation.

Accordingly, for the panel to consider an Aboriginal language ward name that is suggested in a public submission to the review, the name submitted needs to comply with the above guidelines.

# About Wyndham City Council

## Profile

Located in Melbourne's outer western suburbs, halfway between Melbourne and Geelong, Wyndham City Council covers an area of 542 km<sup>2</sup>. It is bordered to the south-west by Geelong City Council, to the north-west by Moorabool Shire Council, to the north by Melton City and Brimbank City councils and to the east by Hobsons Bay City Council.

In the south the council area includes the localities of Werribee South and Cocoroc and to the east are Point Cook, Williams Landing, and part of Laverton. Along the northern council boundary are Laverton North, Truganina, Tarneit, and part of Mount Cottrell. The established areas of Werribee and Hoppers Crossing are in the centre of the council area. Wyndham Vale and Manor Lakes, and the less populated areas of Mambourin, Quandong, and parts of Eynesbury and Little River are in the west.

The Traditional Custodians of the land in Wyndham City Council are the Bunurong and Wadawurrung peoples.

## Landscape

Wyndham City Council contains major transport routes connecting Melbourne with Geelong and regional Victoria, including the Princes Freeway and two train lines. The Werribee train line consists of the suburban line that finishes at Werribee and the national freight line that traverses the council from east to west. The regional train line extends around the north and west of the established areas and connects into the Werribee train line south-west of Werribee. The Werribee River flows through the council area and there are a number of waterways and wetlands, including Skeleton Creek and Cheetham Wetlands.

Urban development is limited by the urban growth boundary around the north-western, western and southern parts of the council area (DTP 2023). Land inside the boundary contains established residential areas and large areas of former agricultural land being subdivided for new residential development.

There is a significant industrial area in Laverton North and Truganina, and commercial areas include the Werribee employment precinct and a network of activity centres. Non-urban areas to the south and west of the council area contain small townships, agriculture, quarries, conservation areas, and over 27 km of coastline. Wyndham also includes Werribee Racecourse, Werribee Park, Werribee Open Range Zoo, the Western Treatment Plant, the Port Phillip Prison, and RAAF Bases Point Cook and Williams-Laverton.

## Community

Wyndham City Council was home to 292,011 people in 2021 (ABS 2022a), an increase of 130,436 over the previous decade (ABS 2011). The median age in 2021 of 32 years was lower than for Greater Melbourne overall (37 years) (ABS 2022a; 2022b). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people comprised 0.9% of the population in 2021 (ABS 2022a).

As one of Australia's fastest growing local council areas, Wyndham's population is forecast to grow at a rate of 3.4% per annum from 2022 and 2028. The population is expected to reach over 500,000 by 2041 (.id 2022c). Most growth will be in new residential areas north and west of established areas – Truganina, Tarneit, Wyndham Vale and Manor Lakes (DTP 2023). Higher density housing will be built near activity centres and public transport (DTP 2023), especially in Werribee and Hoppers Crossing.

In 2021, 48% of people were born overseas (from over 120 countries), including 17.3% from India (.id 2022a). Nearly half of all residents (49.8%) spoke a language other than English at home (.id 2022a). Nearly 40 religious communities were represented, including Catholicism (18.1%), Hinduism (14.5%), Islam (9.9%) and Sikhism (6.1%) (.id 2022a).

In 2021, 87.6% of all dwellings were separate houses and 46.1% of families had a mortgage, both higher than the rates for Greater Melbourne overall (.id 2022a). The median household weekly income was \$2,203 in 2021, again higher than for Greater Melbourne (\$1,901) (ABS 2022a, 2022b).

Wyndham has more than 32,000 local businesses that employ over 100,000 people (.id 2022b). The labour force participation rate in 2021 for all residents aged 15 years and over was 66.9%, higher than the average for Greater Melbourne of 64.1% (.id 2022a). The largest employers were transport, postal and warehousing businesses, employing 15.6% of workers in 2021-22 (.id 2022b).

## Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Wyndham City Council is currently divided into 3 wards with a total of 11 councillors:

- one ward with 3 councillors (Iramoo)
- 2 wards with 4 councillors each (Chaffey and Harrison wards).



**Figure 1:** Diagram of current electoral structure of Wyndham City Council.

There are an estimated 196,938 voters in Wyndham City Council, with an estimated ratio of 17,903 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) for more information on Wyndham City Council.

## Last electoral structure review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Wyndham City Council in 2012. This review was carried out under the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)*, which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*.

After conducting the review, the VEC recommended that Wyndham City Council adopt a structure of 11 councillors elected from 3 wards (one ward with 3 councillors and 2 wards with 4 councillors each).

### **Subdivision review**

Since the 2012 representation review, the VEC also conducted a subdivision review of Wyndham City Council in 2020.

Subdivision reviews conducted under the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic) adjusted the internal ward boundaries of a council but did not change the electoral structure or number of councillors. Subdivision reviews were conducted in situations where the voter-to-councillor ratios in one or more wards of a council were forecast to move outside the legislated +/-10% tolerance before the council's next election and aimed to ensure voter-to-councillor ratios for all wards were within tolerance at the election.

The 2020 review of Wyndham City Council aimed to return Chaffey and Harrison wards to within the permitted +/-10% tolerance before the 2020 local council elections.

Visit the Wyndham City Council profile page on the VEC website at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) to access a copy of the 2020 subdivision review final report.

## Preliminary findings and models

### Number of councillors

After taking into consideration the requirements of the Act and the agreed criteria, the panel found 11 councillors to be an appropriate number for Wyndham City Council.

The panel considered the characteristics of Wyndham City Council in relation to similar interface councils, including its population, the number and distribution of voters, and the size and geography of the council.

Similar interface councils to Wyndham City Council						
Local council	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Number of voters at 2020 election	Population (2021 Census)	Current total estimate of voters	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor
Casey City*	397	n/a	365,239	252,670	11	22,970
Wyndham City*	542	154,404	292,011	196,938	11	17,903
Whittlesea City*	490	n/a	229,396	170,869	11	15,533
Hume City*	503	152,470	243,901	170,268	11	15,478
Mornington Peninsula Shire*	727	154,651	168,948	151,741	11	13,794
Melton City*	528	101,010	178,960	120,696	9	13,410

\*These local councils are undergoing an electoral structure review during 2023–24.

### Maintaining 11 councillors

Wyndham City Council currently has an estimated 196,938 voters represented by 11 councillors and covers an area of 542 km<sup>2</sup>. Other interface councils with a similar number of voters usually also have 11 councillors. Like many interface councils, significant population growth is forecast for Wyndham City Council, which may impact on councillor numbers in the future. Currently the panel considers it appropriate for the total number of councillors to remain unchanged.

## Electoral structure

To identify the most appropriate electoral structure, various factors were considered. This included the requirements of the Act, the communities of interest in Wyndham City Council, the appropriateness of ward boundaries and which models offered the best potential for fair and equitable representation and consequently facilitate good governance.

In developing the preliminary models presented in this report, the panel considered a range of models. The strongest 2 models have been put forward for further public comment.

The panel proposes 2 models for the consideration of the Wyndham City Council community:

- a subdivided electoral structure of 11 single-councillor wards (Model 1)
- a subdivided electoral structure of 11 single-councillor wards, with different ward boundaries to Model 1 (Model 2).

Diagrams of the preliminary models are included in [Appendix 1](#).

### **A single-councillor ward structure with 11 councillors (Model 1)**

Under this model, Wyndham City Council would adopt an 11-ward structure. Each ward would be represented by one councillor, in line with the requirements of the Act.

Model 1 uses strong physical boundaries where possible, including train lines, main roads, waterways and locality boundaries. Some minor roads and property boundaries have been used to meet deviation requirements where no stronger boundary was available.

In the areas to the south and west, the rural areas do not have enough voters for one rural-based ward so must be combined with some established areas to meet voter distribution requirements. Model 1 proposes 3 large wards that combine part of the rural area with established areas and distribute future growth across each ward:

- Iramoo Ward consists of the parts of Werribee west of Greaves Street North and north of the Werribee train line, the part of Wyndham Vale south of Greens Road, Mambourin, and Little River north of the train line. The train line is also the southern boundary of the ward.
- Quandong Ward consists of Manor Lakes, Quandong, Eynesbury, and the part of Wyndham Vale north of Greens Road. The north-eastern boundary of the ward is the Werribee River. It includes the Manor Lakes Central shopping centre.
- Werribee Park Ward consists of all of Cocoroc and Werribee South, the parts of Little River and Werribee that are south of the train line, part of Point Cook west of Hacketts Road and south of Grassland Drive/Urchin Way. The ward includes Werribee Park, Werribee Zoo and part of the Werribee City Centre south of the train line.

In the east, most of the established area of Point Cook has been divided into 2 wards:

- Cheetham Ward contains the eastern part of Point Cook, and includes the Point Cook Coastal Park and the RAAF Base Point Cook.



- Featherbrook Ward consists of the western part of Point Cook (excluding the area west of Hacketts Road). It includes the Featherbrook and Sanctuary Lakes shopping centres.

Parts of Point Cook need to be included in other wards to both the west and north to meet legislated voter distribution numbers. Model 1 retains the existing ward boundary of Hacketts Road between the proposed Featherbrook and Werribee Park wards.

In the central area, Model 1 proposes the new Bellbridge and Heathdale wards:

- Bellbridge Ward consists of parts of Hoppers Crossing and includes the Pacific Werribee shopping centre. Its eastern boundary is Skeleton Creek.
- Heathdale Ward consists of the part of Hoppers Crossing south of Heaths Road and west of Morris Road, and all of Werribee north of the train line and east of Greaves Street. The Werribee train line forms its southern boundary.

Both these wards contain well-established areas with similar communities of interest and have significantly less growth forecast than surrounding wards.

To the north of the established areas, there are 4 proposed wards:

- Bemis Ward consists of the north-eastern parts of Tarneit and the western parts of Truganina, and includes the Tarneit Central and Wyndham Village shopping centres.
- Brinbeal Ward contains the southern parts of Tarneit and the western part of Hoppers Crossing. Werribee River forms its western boundary and it includes the Tarneit West Village shopping centre.
- Williams Landing Ward consists of all of Laverton and Laverton North, eastern and southern parts of Truganina, and the sections of Point Cook north of Dunnings Road east of the Boardwalk, and north of Skeleton Creek. It includes Stockland Point Cook Shopping Centre and the RAAF Base Williams-Laverton.
- Wimba Ward contains Mount Cottrell and part of Tarneit north of Sayers Road and west of Derrimut Road. The Werribee River forms its western boundary and it includes the Riverdale Village and Tarneit Gardens shopping centres.

High levels of growth are expected for all 4 northern wards and some communities of interest are likely to extend across ward boundaries. Because of particularly high growth rates, Wimba and Bemis wards are expected to reach the maximum +10% voter deviation by 2024.

Potential drawbacks of Model 1 include:

- Werribee, Hoppers Crossing and Tarneit have each been split across 3 wards and Point Cook has been split across 4 wards, which could divide communities of interest.
- Williams Landing Ward includes communities both north and south of the Werribee train line, which may be a physical barrier.

The panel notes that given the high growth forecast across all of Wyndham City Council and the uneven spread of growth, Model 1 is expected to be unviable by 2028 as most wards will be outside the required +/- 10% deviation.

### **A single-councillor ward structure with 11 councillors (alternative version) (Model 2)**

Under this model, Wyndham City Council would adopt an 11-ward structure. Each ward would be represented by one councillor, in line with the requirements of the Act.

Model 2 represents the least change from the current electoral structure and maintains most of the boundaries of the existing 3 wards, dividing them into 11 new single-councillor wards.

Proposed wards capture communities of interest and localities reasonably well, using roads, train lines, locality boundaries and waterways to create strong boundaries.

Overall, the ward boundaries to the south and west of the council area are similar to those proposed under Model 1. The proposed wards to the north of the Council area (north of Heaths Road and Dunnings Road) provide the greatest variations from Model 1.

Like Model 1, the rural areas and the established areas to the south and west for Model 2 are captured by 3 proposed wards. Both the proposed Quandong and Iramoo wards are identical to those in Model 1. Considering voter distribution, growth patterns and physical barriers (Werribee River and train line) the proposed wards provide logical boundaries for both models. They contain communities of interest well and have strong boundaries.

The proposed Werribee Park Ward in Model 2 is almost identical to Model 1. The only difference is that Model 2 extends the eastern boundary further east across Point Cook Road/ Aviation Road to include the RAAF Base Point Cook and part of the Point Cook Coastal Park. The Werribee train line provides a strong northern boundary, and communities of interest south of the train line are maintained.

To the east, the proposed Featherbrook Ward is identical to the ward of the same name in Model 1. The proposed Saltwater Ward is almost identical to the proposed Cheetham Ward in Model 1, except that its southern boundary is Point Cook Homestead Road. The proposed Waterholes Ward contains a mix of established areas in Hoppers Crossing, the newer area of Williams Landing, and extends south across the train line to include parts of Point Cook. The ward is compact and there are good road connections between the localities in this ward, despite the physical barrier of the train line.

In the central area, Model 2 proposes an identical Heathdale Ward to Model 1. The proposed Grange Ward is a compact ward that contains part of Hoppers Crossing. Both wards have strong boundaries, will have significantly less growth forecast than surrounding wards and contain similar communities of interest in established areas.

Model 2 proposes 3 wards that extend across the council area's northern boundary:

- Bemis Ward contains the northern part of Truganina (north of Sayers Road), Laverton, Laverton North and the eastern part of Williams Landing (east of Palmers Road). Its western boundary is Skeleton Creek. It includes the RAAF Base Williams-Laverton.

- Brinbeal Ward consists of Mount Cottrell and the south-western part of Tarneit. The Werribee River forms its western boundary. It includes the Riverdale Village and Tarneit West Village shopping centres.
- Wimba Ward consists of the north-eastern part of Tarneit. Its eastern boundary is Skeleton Creek. It includes Tarneit Central, Tarneit Gardens and Wyndham Village shopping centres.

All 3 northern wards have high growth forecasts, and Model 2 seeks to distribute the established and growth areas across each ward to balance voter numbers. Model 2 contains Tarneit in 2 wards (Brinbeal and Wimba wards), rather than the 3 in Model 1. Some communities of interest are likely to extend across all wards, based on similar socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

Potential drawbacks of Model 2 include:

- Werribee and Hoppers Crossing have both been split across 3 wards and Point Cook has been split across 4 wards, which could divide communities of interest.
- Waterholes Ward includes communities both north and south of the Werribee train line, which may be a physical barrier.

The panel notes that given the high growth forecast across all of Wyndham City Council and the uneven spread of growth, Model 2 is expected to be unviable by 2028 as most wards will be outside the required +/- 10% deviation.

## **Summary**

Introducing single-councillor wards represents a large electoral structure change for Wyndham City Council. Achieving models that divide communities into appropriate wards while also accounting for population growth and ensuring they comply with the +/-10% requirement can be challenging.

Wyndham City Council has strong physical barriers such as main roads, train lines and waterways that divide communities. Across the council area communities of interest have different socio-economic and demographic characteristics, particularly evident between rural, established and new growth areas. The significant rate of population growth it has experienced recently is expected to continue and will be unevenly spread across the council area.

Each model deals with these challenges differently. Model 1 seeks to use strong boundaries and keep communities of interest together where possible. It seeks to spread growth across a number of wards and balance voter distribution accordingly.

Model 2 represents the least change from the current electoral structure. It generally maintains existing ward boundaries and divides each existing ward into single-councillor wards, based on the number of councillors.

Both models divide the southern part of the council area similarly, but have differences in how they divide the northern part of the council area.

Overall, Model 2 provides a more even distribution of voters across wards than Model 1 to meet the legislated voter deviations in 2024. However, given the high and uneven rates of growth forecast it was not possible to make either model remain viable to 2028. Most wards are expected to be outside of the accepted +/- 10% deviation and a further ward boundary review will be required by this time.

Both models have strengths and potential drawbacks that will appeal to different communities of interest. The panel welcomes feedback and suggestions for improvement from the public through response submissions.

## Models for public feedback

The panel considers all models outlined below to be the single-councillor ward electoral structures with the best potential to offer fair and equitable representation for voters in Wyndham City Council and consequently facilitate good governance. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for detailed maps of these models.

### Model 1

Wyndham City Council has 11 councillors and is divided into 11 wards with one councillor per ward.

Ward names: Bellbridge Ward, Bemim Ward, Brinbeal Ward, Cheetham Ward, Featherbrook Ward, Heathdale Ward, Iramoo Ward, Quandong Ward, Werribee Park Ward, Williams Landing Ward, Wimba Ward.

### Model 2

Wyndham City Council has 11 councillors and is divided into 11 wards with one councillor per ward.

Ward names: Bemim Ward, Brinbeal Ward, Featherbrook Ward, Grange Ward, Heathdale Ward, Iramoo Ward, Quandong Ward, Saltwater Ward, Waterholes Ward, Werribee Park Ward, Wimba Ward.

## Ward names

The panel has suggested ward names to identify the wards in each model and invites comments from the community on these names as part of submissions responding to the preliminary report. The basis of the ward name recommendations for each model are described below.

### Model 1

Bellbridge ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a street and school in that ward. It is also the name of a park in that ward.

Bemim, Brinbeal and Wimba ward names are new and are based on the registered name of a school in each ward.

Cheetham ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a creek in that ward. It is also the name of wetlands in that ward.

Featherbrook ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a street and school in that ward. It is also the name of a park, community centre, kindergarten and shopping centre in that ward.

Heathdale ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a school and kindergarten in that ward. It is also part of the name of the Heathdale Glen Orden Wetlands in that ward.

Iramoo ward name is based on the existing name of a ward under the current electoral structure. It is also the registered name of a school in that ward.

Quandong and Williams Landing ward names are new and are based on localities in each ward.

Werribee Park ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a park and a school in that ward.

## **Model 2**

Bemin, Brinbeal, Featherbrook, Heathdale, Iramoo, Quandong, Werribee Park and Wimba ward names are as outlined above for Model 1.

Grange ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a school in that ward. It is also the name of a community centre and kindergarten in that ward.

Saltwater ward name is new and is based on the registered name of a school in that ward.

Waterholes is new and is based on part of the registered name of a creek in that ward (Skeleton Waterholes Creek).




The panel will review ward name suggestions received during the response submission stage when forming the final advice to the Minister for Local Government on the electoral structure of the council. Suggested ward names should comply with the panel's approach to naming wards (see [Deciding on ward names](#) and [Use of Aboriginal language](#)). All ward name suggestions received during the response submission stage will be provided to the Minister for consideration at the conclusion of the electoral structure review.

## Next steps

### Response submissions

Any person or group, including the local council under review, can make a response submission to the electoral representation advisory panel. In your submission you should address the models proposed by the panel in this preliminary report.

You can make a submission:

	<p><b>Online</b></p> <p>Visit <a href="https://vec.vic.gov.au">vec.vic.gov.au</a> to make a submission online.</p> <p>You will need to make an account to use the online Public Submission Tool and can save a draft submission to finish later.</p>
	<p><b>By email</b></p> <p><a href="mailto:Wyndham.ERAPSubmissions@vec.vic.gov.au">Wyndham.ERAPSubmissions@vec.vic.gov.au</a></p>
	<p><b>By post</b></p> <p>Electoral Representation Advisory Panel c/o Victorian Electoral Commission Level 11, 530 Collins St Melbourne VIC 3000</p>

The panel must receive all response submissions before 5 pm on Wednesday 22 November 2023. If you post your submission, make sure it has enough time to reach the panel before the deadline. Late submissions will not be accepted.

#### Required information

For your submission to be considered, you must include your:

- full name
- contact phone number or email address
- postal or residential address.

To protect the integrity and transparency of the review process, the panel will not consider submissions without this information. If you are submitting as a group or organisation, you must include the name of a nominated contact person who is authorised to submit on behalf of your group.

On behalf of the panel, the VEC will handle information provided by submitters in accordance with the privacy policy available at [vec.vic.gov.au/privacy](https://vec.vic.gov.au/privacy)

## Public access to submissions

To ensure transparency in the electoral structure review process, your submission will be published on the VEC website at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au). The VEC will remove your signature and contact details, including residential and postal addresses, from all public copies but must publish your full name (or group name) and locality (suburb or town).

Please note that any submission content that is potentially defamatory, offensive, obscene or that includes the personal information of people or organisations who are not a party to the submission may also be redacted before publication.

## Public hearing

If you make a response submission, you can also ask to speak at an online public hearing to support your submission and expand on your views.

The online public hearing is scheduled for:

Time: 10 am

Date: Tuesday 28 November 2023

The panel encourages participation in the public hearing. If you wish to speak at the public hearing, you **must** indicate this in your response submission. The public hearing will not be held if there are no requests to speak.

Anyone can attend a public hearing, but you will only be able to speak if you asked to in your response submission. If you ask to speak, the VEC will contact you to arrange a time for you to speak at the hearing. You will have 10 minutes to address the public hearing panel, which will include at least 2 of the review panel members. The members of the public hearing panel may ask you questions.

Visit the VEC website at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) for more information on public hearings.

## Final report

Following the public hearing, the review panel will consider all evidence gathered and prepare a final report for the Minister for Local Government containing a recommendation for the number of councillors and the electoral structure for the local council.

The final report is scheduled to be provided to the Minister on Wednesday 24 January 2024. The Minister will consider the final reports, including any determination to make the reports publicly available. Any change to the electoral structure of Wyndham City Council following on from this review is expected to apply at the October 2024 local council elections. Under the Act, the final council electoral structure will be set by an Order in Council published in the Victoria Government Gazette.



## References

ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) (2022a) [2021 Census All persons QuickStats, Wyndham \(LGA\)](#), ABS, accessed 2 October 2023.

—(2022b) 2021 [2021 Census All persons QuickStats, Greater Melbourne](#), ABS, accessed 2 October 2023.

—(2011) [2011 Census All persons QuickStats, Wyndham \(LGA\)](#), ABS, accessed 2 October 2023.

DTP (Department of Transport and Planning) (2023) [Wyndham planning scheme](#), DTP website, accessed 29 September 2023.

Electoral Act 2002 (Vic).

FPSR (First Peoples State Relations) (2023) [Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners](#), First Peoples State Relations website, accessed 19 September 2023.

Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (Vic).

.id (Informed Decisions) (2022a) [City of Wyndham community profile](#), .id website, accessed 2 October 2023.

—(2022b) [City of Wyndham economic profile](#), .id website, accessed 2 October 2023.

—(2022c) [City of Wyndham population forecast](#), .id website, accessed 2 October 2023.

Local Government Act 1989 (Vic).

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).

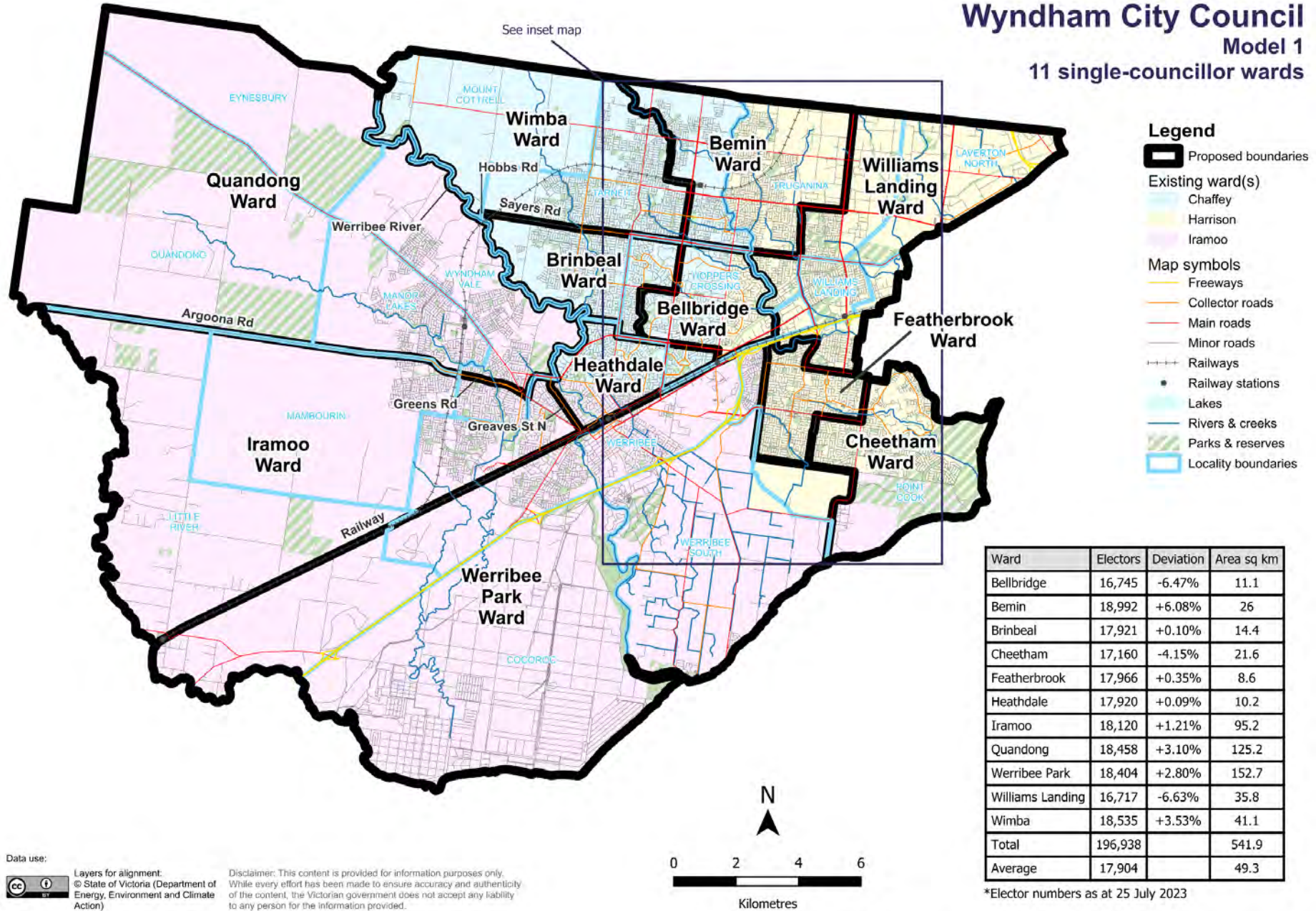
Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 (Vic).

## Appendix 1: Model maps

The following maps are included in this report:

Map	Page
Model 1 – a single-councillor ward structure with 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward.	27
Model 2 – a single-councillor ward structure with 11 councillors – 11 wards with one councillor per ward (with boundaries different to Model 1).	30

# Wyndham City Council Model 1 11 single-councillor wards

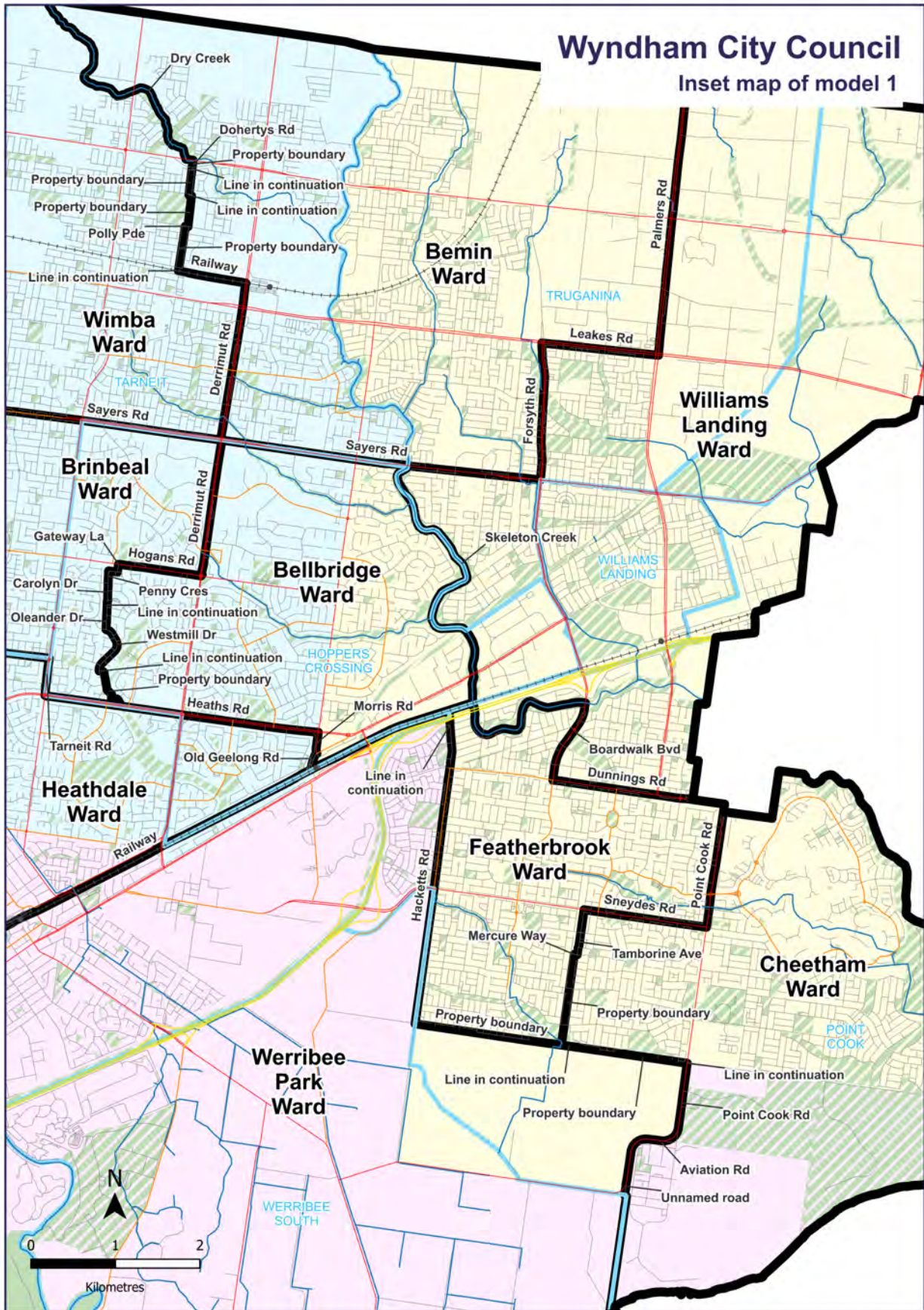


Data use:



Layers for alignment:  
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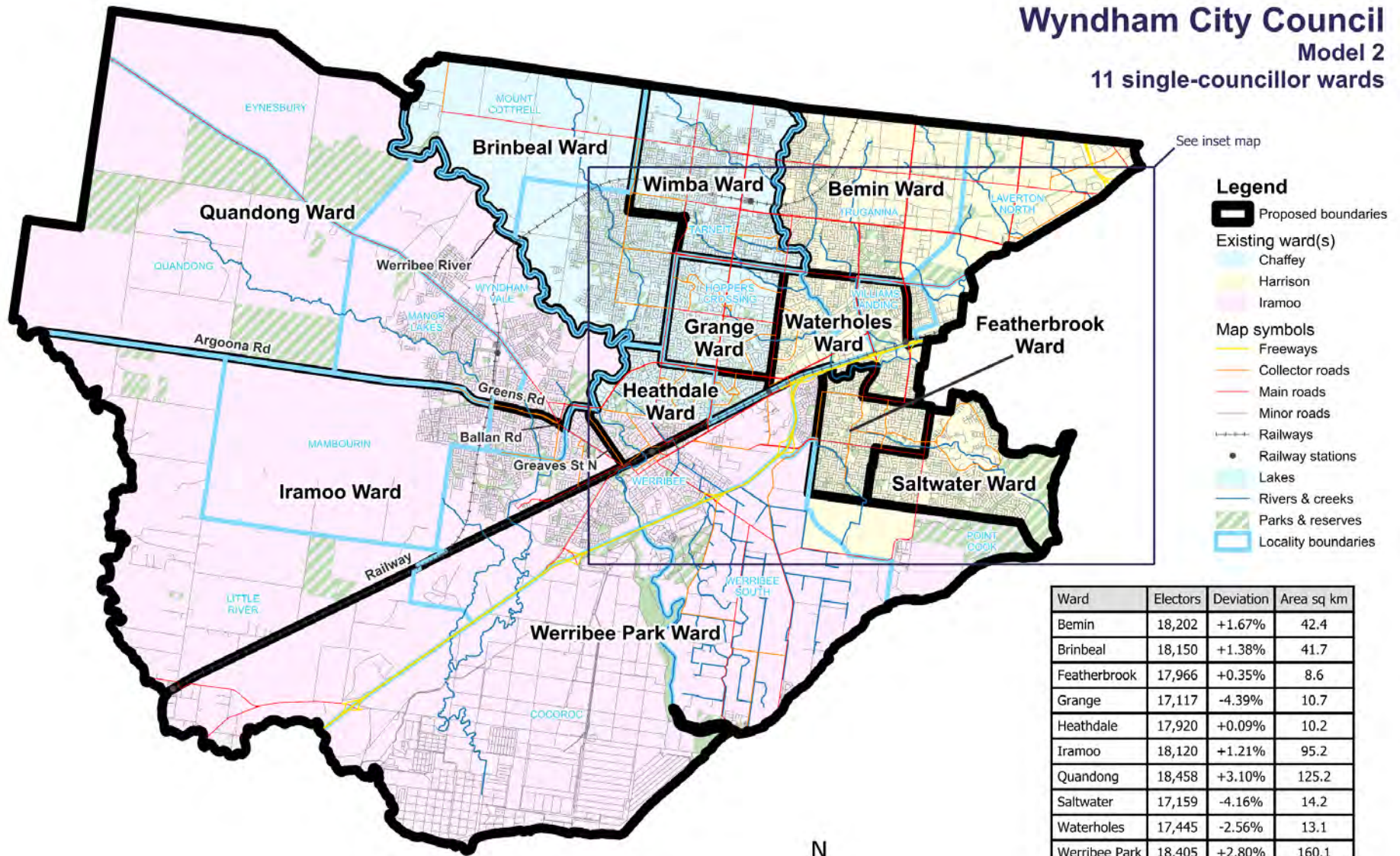
## Data for Model 1

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area# (square km)
Bellbridge	16,745	-6.47%	11.1
Bemin	18,992	+6.08%	26
Brinbeal	17,921	+0.10%	14.4
Cheetham	17,160	-4.15%	21.6
Featherbrook	17,966	+0.35%	8.6
Heathdale	17,920	+0.09%	10.2
Iramoo	18,120	+1.21%	95.2
Quandong	18,458	+3.10%	125.2
Werribee Park	18,404	+2.80%	152.7
Williams Landing	16,717	-6.63%	35.8
Wimba	18,535	+3.53%	41.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>196,938</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>541.9</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>17,904</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>49.3</b>

\*Elector numbers at 25 July 2023

#Ward area (square km) and total council area is measured at level of accuracy required for electoral boundaries. This may vary slightly from other data sources (for example, the ABS).

# Wyndham City Council Model 2 11 single-councillor wards

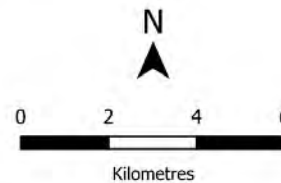


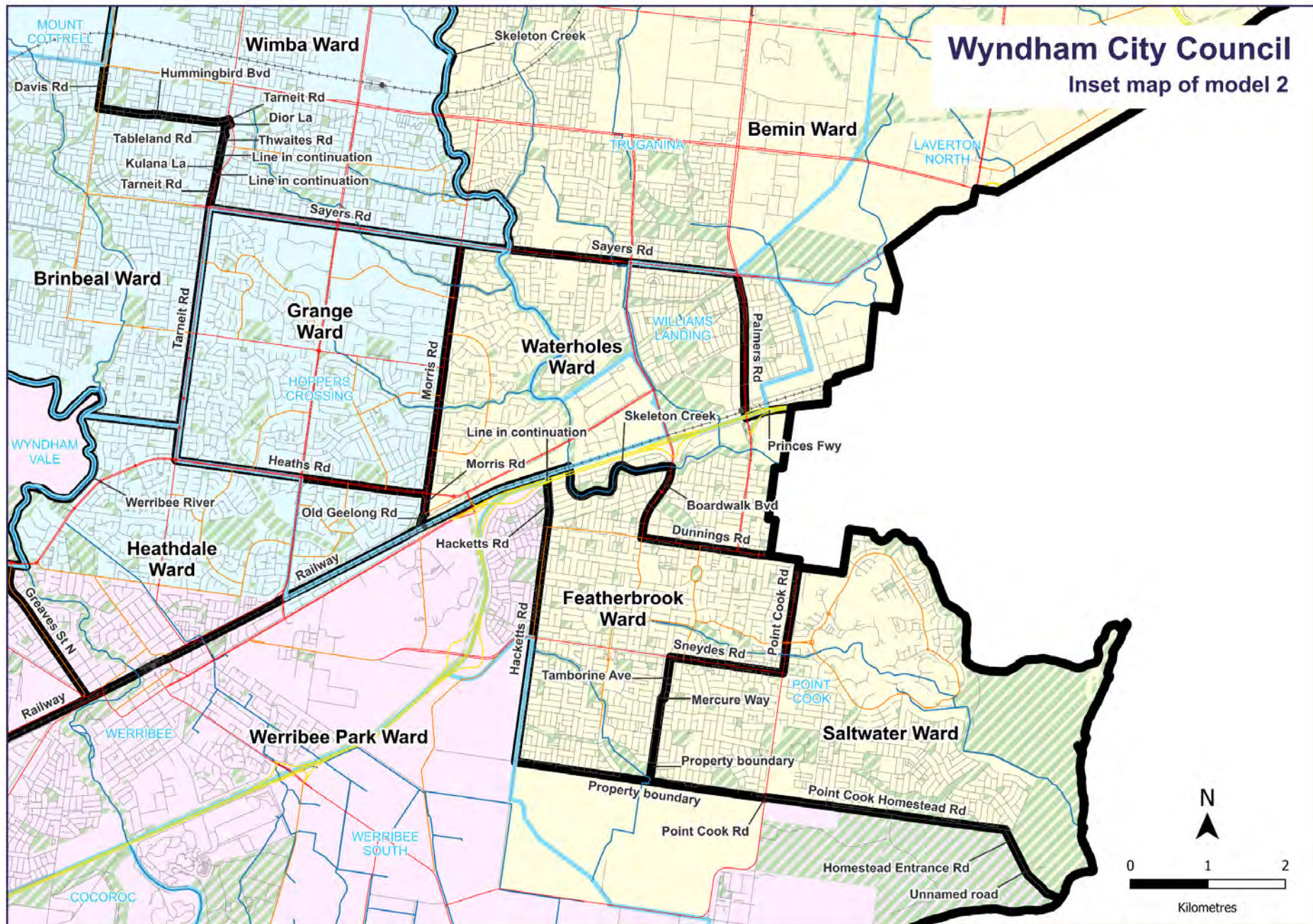
Ward	Electors	Deviation	Area sq km
Bemina	18,202	+1.67%	42.4
Brinbeal	18,150	+1.38%	41.7
Featherbrook	17,966	+0.35%	8.6
Grange	17,117	-4.39%	10.7
Heathdale	17,920	+0.09%	10.2
Iramoo	18,120	+1.21%	95.2
Quandong	18,458	+3.10%	125.2
Saltwater	17,159	-4.16%	14.2
Waterholes	17,445	-2.56%	13.1
Werribee Park	18,405	+2.80%	160.1
Wimba	17,996	+0.52%	20.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>196,938</b>		<b>541.9</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>17,904</b>		<b>49.3</b>

\*Elector numbers as at 25 July 2023

Data use:  
Layers for alignment:  
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## Data for Model 2

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area# (square km)
Bemin	18,202	+1.67%	42.4
Brinbeal	18,150	+1.38%	41.7
Featherbrook	17,966	+0.35%	8.6
Grange	17,117	-4.39%	10.7
Heathdale	17,920	+0.09%	10.2
Iramoo	18,120	+1.21%	95.2
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<b>Total</b>	<b>196,938</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>541.9</b>
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\*Elector numbers at 25 July 2023

#Ward area (square km) and total council area is measured at level of accuracy required for electoral boundaries. This may vary slightly from other data sources (for example, the ABS).



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