

Local council electoral structure review

Preliminary Report

Melton City Council

October 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges the Wurrundjeri, 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

Version	Date approved	Approved by
1	19 October 2023	Ms Julie Eisenbise
1	20 October 2023	Mr Tim Presnell
1	19 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 Melton 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), Melton 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 Melton 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 16](#).

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 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward, with different ward boundaries to Model 1.
- Model 3: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 10 councillors – 10 wards with one councillor per ward.

Details on these models, including maps, are provided 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 on Wednesday 15 November 2023. If any response submitters wish to speak at a public hearing, the panel will hold an online

public hearing at 10am on Wednesday 22 November 2023. Following this, the panel will present its final recommendation to the Minister on Wednesday 20 December 2023.

More information about the review process is available on the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) website at 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 Melton City Council) must now have single-councillor ward electoral structures.

For Melton 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 Melton 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 Melton 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, including:
 - current information on the review process
 - fact sheets for each council under review and a submission guide.

Melton City Council was also offered but did not take 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 Melton 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 in this report by the panel are guided by the Act's intention for fairness and equity in voter representation.

In examining the appropriate number of councillors for Melton 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 Melton 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 Melton City Council

Profile

Melton City Council, formerly Melton Shire Council, was created in 1994 when Melton Shire was amalgamated with parts of the City of Werribee. The municipality is located on Melbourne's rural-urban fringe, 47km west-northwest of the Melbourne CBD, and covers an area of 528 km². It shares its borders with Macedon Ranges Shire Council to the north, Hume and Brimbank City Councils to the east, Wyndham City Council to the South and Moorabool City Council to the west.

The Traditional Custodians of the land on which the municipality sits are the Wurrundjeri, Bunurong and Wadawurrung Peoples.

Landscape

In 2021 the population of the council area was approximately 178,960 (ABS 2022a), an increase of 63.7% since 2011 when the population was 109,259. Originally centred around the satellite town of Melton, from the 1990s onwards the population in the east rapidly increased as an extension of the growing Melbourne suburban fringe, particularly in the suburbs of Caroline Springs, Hillside and Taylors Hill. Other Melbourne satellite localities in the municipality include Diggers Rest, Eynesbury and Aintree. While the middle of the municipality is no longer considered green wedge land and is designated as a major urban growth corridor, it continues to be the least populated area of the council. The main centres of population remain concentrated in Melton in the west and the suburban Melbourne fringe in the east.

The council area includes 31 suburbs and is serviced by a major transport corridor, the Western Freeway, which runs from Melbourne to Ballarat and ultimately Adelaide. The Melton Highway services the area also, as does the Calder Freeway - which forms the northeast boundary of the municipality. The Ballarat, Bendigo and Maryborough rail lines service the council area.

Important geographical features include the Werribee River, Melton Reservoir and Mount Cottrell. Situated on the eastern edge of the Victorian Volcanic Plain, the Melton area is largely flat and fertile.

Community

At 5.2% pa, population growth in the City of Melton is the second highest for a Victorian council. In the 10 years to 2021, the population of the municipality increased by 63.7% and the population is estimated to reach 231,968 by 2028. The projected population growth areas hug the Ballarat rail corridor, the Western Freeway and Melton Highway.

The median age of residents is significantly lower than in Greater Melbourne and Victoria, while at 6.5%, unemployment is higher than the metropolitan and state averages (ABS 2022a, 2022b). The education level of residents is lower than in Greater Melbourne and Victoria (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b).

Home ownership, at 74.6%, is higher than the Greater Melbourne rate of 66.8% (owned outright and with a mortgage), while the proportion of households renting is lower (22.6% compared with 30.2%) (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b). The weekly median household income is \$1,887, which is comparable to the median for Greater Melbourne of \$1,901 (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b).

The population is very diverse. Nearly 60% of residents have both parents born overseas, higher than the average for Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b). Over half (54.3%) of the population speaks only English at home, which is slightly lower than the rate for Greater Melbourne overall (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b). The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people at the 2021 census was 1.2%, nearly double the 0.7% found across Greater Melbourne (ABS 2022a, ABS 2022b).

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Melton City Council is currently divided into 3 wards with a total of 9 councillors:

- one ward with 4 councillors (Coburn)
- one ward with 3 councillors (Cambridge)
- one ward with 2 councillors (Watts)

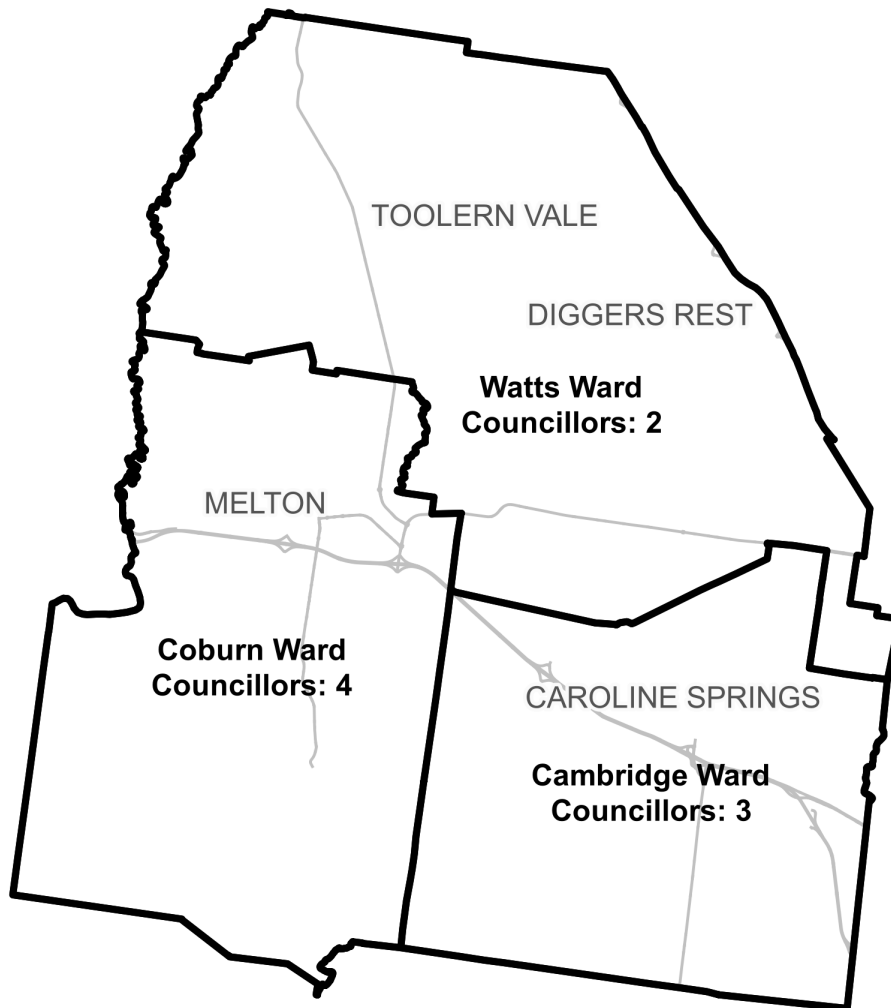


Figure 1: Diagram of current electoral structure of Melton City Council.

There are approximately 120,696 voters in Melton City Council, with an approximate ratio of 13,410 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on Melton City Council.

Last electoral structure review

The electoral representation review conducted in 2008 recommended to the Minister that the number of councillors be maintained and that the 7 wards be decreased to 3 wards of 3, 2 and 2 councillors, a recommendation that was accepted.

The electoral representation review conducted in 2015 recommended to the Minister that the number of councillors be increased from 7 to 9 and that the structure be altered to 3 wards of 4, 3 and 2 councillors, a recommendation that was accepted.

The electoral representation reviews in 2008 and 2015 were conducted under the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic), which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the final report of the 2015 electoral representation review.

Preliminary findings and models

The panel determined that 2 9-ward electoral structure models and one 10-ward electoral structure model are suitable for public consultation based on observance of communities of interest in relation to ward boundaries and compliance with section 15(2) of the Act.

Number of councillors

After taking into consideration the requirements of the Act and the agreed criteria, the panel found 9 to 10 councillors to be the appropriate number for Melton City Council.

The panel considered the characteristics of Melton 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 Melton City Council						
Local council	Area (km ²)	Number of voters at 2020 election	Population (2021 Census)	Current total estimate of voters	Number of councillors	Number of voters per councillor
Wyndham City*	542	154,404	292,011	196,938	11	17,903
Whittlesea City*	490	n/a	299,396	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	104,010	178,960	120,696	9	13,410
Yarra Ranges Shire	2,468	117,583	156,068	117,900	9	13,100
Cardinia Shire	1,283	78,991	118,194	83,258	9	9,251
Nillumbik Shire	432	48,101	62,895	47,845	7	6,835

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

9 to 10 councillors

The panel determined that the number of councillors should remain unchanged in 2 of the models presented because Melton City Council currently has 9 councillors and similar councils in comparison also have 9 councillors. In addition, the models developed with 9 councillors provided strong electoral structures. Nine councillors are seen to be sufficient to meet the needs of the current population.

However, considering the rapid growth predicted to the population of this area, the panel also determined that an increase to 10 councillors could be justifiable to meet future needs. The

panel is interested in gathering the views of the community on the appropriate number of councillors required to meet the needs of the people of the Melton City council area.

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 Melton 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 models have been put forward for further public comment.

The panel proposes 3 models for the consideration of the Melton City Council community:

- a subdivided electoral structure of 9 single-councillor wards (Model 1)
- a subdivided electoral structure of 9 single-councillor wards, with different ward boundaries to Model 1 (Model 2)
- a subdivided electoral structure of 10 single-councillor wards (Model 3).

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

A single-councillor ward structure with 9 councillors (Model 1)

Under this model, Melton City Council would adopt a 9-ward structure. Each ward would be represented by one councillor, in line with the requirements of the Act.

Model 1 aligns closely to suburb boundaries within the council area and as a result tends to keep each suburb contained within a single ward. The major area of growth in the west, Melton, is divided between 4 wards and is mostly contained in urban-focused wards. Two large, mostly rural wards pick up the voters that cannot be contained in the urban-focused wards. Both include areas of urban growth to the north and south of Melton, alongside more isolated towns on the borders of the council. Bullion Park Ward captures the population in the middle of the council area along the east-west transport corridor and extends from Bonnie Brook south to Mount Cottrell. In the east, suburbs are well contained within 3 compact wards. The northernmost is focused on Hillside, the middle on Taylors Lake and the one in the south on Caroline Springs-Burnside Heights. To the south Mount Atkinson Ward combines rural and urban areas, including part of Burnside.

A drawback of this model is that it does not use the strong and clearly defined features of the Western Freeway and the railway line as ward boundaries to the same extent as other models. While Bullion Park ward is forecast to be within the +/- 10% requirement by the next local government elections in 2024, it is outside of statutory tolerance on current figures to account for the projected future growth that is concentrated in this ward. The boundary following the Werribee River in Werribee River Ward must deviate from this strong boundary to take in more voter numbers from parts of Melton South and Strathulloh. Yangardook Ward has all of Kurunjang locality contained but needs to also include parts of Fraser Rise in the east. Mount

Atkinson Ward is made up of many parts of suburbs such as sections of Caroline Springs and Burnside as well as reaching as far north as Fraser Rise. Where a ward contains many sections of different localities or suburbs it can be seen to be less effective in grouping location-based communities of interest. Model 1 is less stable than is ideal, with a greater risk that tolerances will be exceeded compared with other models.

A single-councillor ward structure with 9 councillors (alternative version) (Model 2)

Under this model, Melton City Council would adopt a 9-ward structure. Each ward would be represented by one councillor, in line with the requirements of the Act.

Model 2 contains the municipality's growth areas well and uses physical features such as waterways and main roads as boundaries. Kororoit Creek is used as a boundary between Mount Atkinson and Springside wards, the Western Freeway, Werribee River and other main roads are used as the boundary between the 4 wards in the west. This model combines high- and low-density areas within wards. In the western part of the council area, the use of freeways as a continuous boundary results in 4 wards oriented north-south, each taking a share of the main population centre, and extending north or south. Each has an almost equal share of urban and rural land.

Drawbacks of Model 2 are that locality boundaries are not followed as closely as Model 1. The approach in the division of the urban area of Melton and combining these with sections with nearby regional areas is considered another potential drawback. This results in longer wards that reach out to less populated areas and generally less compact wards than in other models. This also has the effect of combining voters with different communities of interest in the same wards. Other drawbacks are that although the bulk of Toolern Vale is on the Yangardook Ward side of Gisborne-Melton Rd, the locality of Toolern Vale is split between wards. The Oakbridge ward contains parts of Melton South and stretches out to part of Rockbank, and part of Caroline Springs is required to be included in the Mount Atkinson Ward.

A single-councillor ward structure with 10 councillors (Model 3)

Under this model, Melton City Council would adopt a 10-ward structure. Each ward would be represented by one councillor, in line with the requirements of the Act.

The panel determined that it was desirable to include a 10-ward electoral structure model because the municipality is on the cusp of needing an additional councillor due to its rapidly expanding population. There are several benefits to this model. It provides the municipality with an additional councillor, it makes good use of the Western Freeway, Melton Highway, Werribee River, Kororoit Creek and Toolern Creek as ward boundaries and it contains the major population areas. Six wards are arranged to capture these population areas in the east and west and along the growth corridor and follow the major transport route. Two wards to the north and 2 wards to the south of growth and transport corridor capture the rural areas either side. Model 3 is considered relatively stable and is projected to be within statutory tolerances for the 2024 election.

Drawbacks of this model include the Caroline Springs area where the group of existing electors is split between 5 wards on minor roads. Fieldstone Ward in the southeast corner is further out of deviation compared with the other wards in all of the proposed 9-councillor models. Some other areas are also divided between wards - Thornhill Park between 2 wards and Cobblebank between 3 wards. Overall, there is less alignment with locality and suburb boundaries and greater volatility between current and projected deviations in Model 3 than is the case for other 9-councillor structures modelled during the review. In the event that the population growth in Coolibah, Fieldstone, Lake Caroline and Sugar Gum Wards is not as currently projected, statutory tolerances may be exceeded in those wards.

Summary

In summary, introducing single-councillor wards represents a large electoral structure change for Melton 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.

Balancing the 2 centres of growth at either end of the council area and along the main transport corridor, connecting them both with large rural areas in the north and south was central to this challenge. Each model addresses these challenges in a particular way.

- Model 1 with 9 councillors attempts to keep suburbs together in wards as much as possible, resulting in 5 urban-focused wards (3 capturing the bulk of the population in the east and 2 capturing the same in the west), 3 wards mixing urban and rural areas along the south and one large ward in the north, which also combines rural and urban areas
- Model 2 also with 9 councillors uses the freeway as a continuous boundary in the west, with 2 wards extending north and 2 extending south. Each of these wards combine urban and rural areas almost evenly. In the east, Kororoit Creek provides a strong boundary, north of which are 3 wards capturing the main population areas in this area. A ward further north includes urban and rural areas, as well as Diggers Rest, while a ward in the south captures the area south of Kororoit Creek.
- Model 3 with 10 councillors provides 6 wards confined to the main east-west transport and growth corridor, with each roughly equal in size by area. To the north, 2 wards capture the rural areas and towns, as well as those voters that due to numbers could not be included in the more urban wards. Likewise, in the south, 2 wards capture the large rural areas alongside some urban growth, with good use made of the freeway and rail line as a boundary.

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 Melton City Council and consequently facilitate good governance. Please see [Appendix 1](#) for detailed maps of these models.

Model 1

Melton City Council has 9 councillors and is divided into 9 wards with one councillor per ward.

Ward names: Bullion Park Ward, Bulmans Ward, Hillside Ward, Kurrajong Ward, Lake Caroline Ward, Mount Atkinson Ward, Springside Ward, Werribee River Ward, Yangardook Ward.

Model 2

Melton City Council has 9 councillors and is divided into 9 wards with one councillor per ward.

Ward names: Coolibah Ward, Heron Park Ward, Hilltop Ward, Lake Caroline Ward, Mount Atkinson Ward, Oakbridge Ward, Springside Ward, Stringybark Ward, Yangardook Ward.

Model 3

Melton City Council has 10 councillors and is divided into 10 wards with one councillor per ward.

Ward names: Bullum Bullum Ward, Cambrian Ward, Coolibah Ward, Fieldstone Ward, Hilltop Ward, Jackwood Ward, Lake Caroline Ward, Stringybark Ward, Sugar Gum Ward, Watts 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

Bullion Park and Kurrajong wards are named after parks found in each proposed ward. Bulmans Ward is named after a main road in the proposed ward. Hillside and Taylors Hill wards are named after prominent localities found in each proposed ward. Lake Caroline, Mount Atkinson and Werribee River wards are named after natural features found in each proposed ward. Yangardook Ward is named after a creek and park found in the proposed ward.

Model 2

Heron Park and Hilltop wards are named after parks found in each proposed ward. Coolibah, Lake Caroline, Mount Atkinson, Oakbridge, Springybark and Yangardook wards are all named after natural features found in each proposed ward. Springside is named after a reserve found in the proposed ward.

Model 3

Bullum Bullum, Cambrian and Sugar Gum wards are named after reserves found in each of the proposed wards. Coolibah, Lake Caroline and Stringybark wards are named after natural features found in each proposed ward. Fieldstone Ward is named after a prominent locality found in the proposed ward. Hilltop and Jackwood wards are named after parks found in each proposed ward. Watts Ward is a previously used ward name and based on a reserve.




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>Online</p> <p>Visit vec.vic.gov.au 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>By email</p> <p>melton.erapsubmissions@vec.vic.gov.au</p>
	<p>By post</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 15 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

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. 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: Wednesday 22 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 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 20 December 2023. The Minister will consider the final report, including any determination to make the report publicly available. Any change to the electoral structure of Melton 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 Melton, Census All persons QuickStats](#), ABS, accessed 1 September 2023

— (2022b) [2021 Census All Person Quickstats, Greater Melbourne](#), ABS website, accessed 1 September 2023

Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (Vic)

Local Government Act 1989 (Vic)

Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

Local Government (Electoral) Regulations 2020 (Vic)

Appendix 1: Model maps

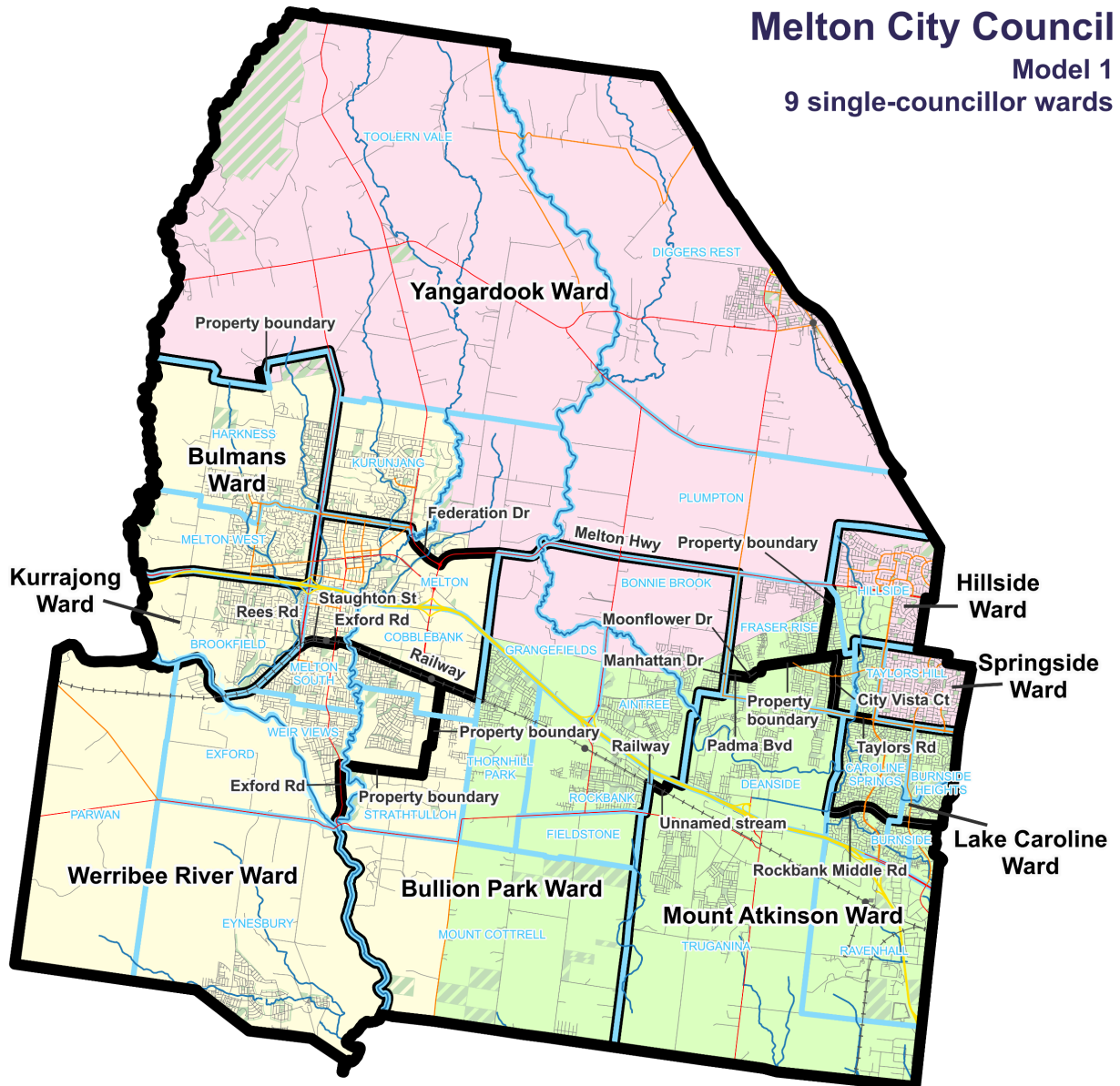
The following maps are included in this report:

Map	Page
Model 1 – a single-councillor ward structure with 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward.	25
Model 2 – a single-councillor ward structure with 9 councillors – 9 wards with one councillor per ward (with boundaries different to Model 1).	27
Model 3 – a single-councillor ward structure with 9 councillors – 10 wards with one councillor per ward.	30

Melton City Council

Model 1

9 single-councillor wards



Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Bullion Park	10,465	-21.97%	89.1
Bulmans	13,585	+1.3%	27.3
Hillside	13,187	-1.67%	8.5
Kurrajong	15,170	+13.12%	27.7
Lake Caroline	14,226	+6.08%	7.8
Mount Atkinson	12,612	-5.96%	70.3
Springside	14,393	+7.33%	6.8
Werribee River	13,372	-0.29%	84
Yangardook	13,686	+2.05%	206.1
Total	120,696		527.6
Average	13,411		58.6

*Elector numbers as at 25 July 2023

Data use:

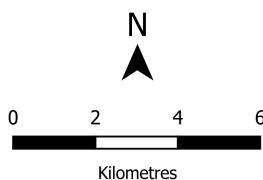


Layers for alignment:
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Legend

- Proposed boundaries
- Existing ward(s)
 - Cambridge
 - Coburn
 - Watts
- Map symbols
 - Freeways
 - Collector roads
 - Main roads
 - Minor roads
 - Railways
 - Railway stations
 - Rivers & creeks
 - Lakes
 - Parks & reserves
 - Locality boundaries



Data for Model 1

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area# (square km)
Bullion Park Ward	10,465	-21.97%	89.1
Bulmans Ward	13,585	+1.3%	27.3
Hillside Ward	13,187	-1.67%	8.5
Kurrajong Ward	15,170	+13.12%	27.7
Lake Caroline Ward	14,226	+6.08%	7.8
Mount Atkinson Ward	12,612	-5.96%	70.3
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Werribee River Ward	13,372	-0.29%	84.0
Yangardook Ward	13,686	+2.05%	206.1
Total	120,696	n/a	527.6
Average	13,411	n/a	58.6

*Elector numbers as 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 (e.g. ABS).

Melton City Council

Model 2

9 single-councillor wards



Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Coolibah	14,808	+10.42%	85.5
Heron Park	13,497	+0.64%	5.8
Hilltop	14,602	+8.88%	89.6
Lake Caroline	13,212	-1.48%	7.2
Mount Atkinson	12,264	-8.55%	79.4
Oakbridge	11,749	-12.39%	66.1
Springside	13,099	-2.32%	27.0
Stringybark	13,878	+3.48%	70.4
Yangardook	13,587	+1.31%	96.7
Total	120,696		527.7
Average	13,411		58.6

*Elector numbers as at 25 July 2023

Data use:

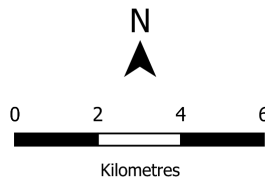


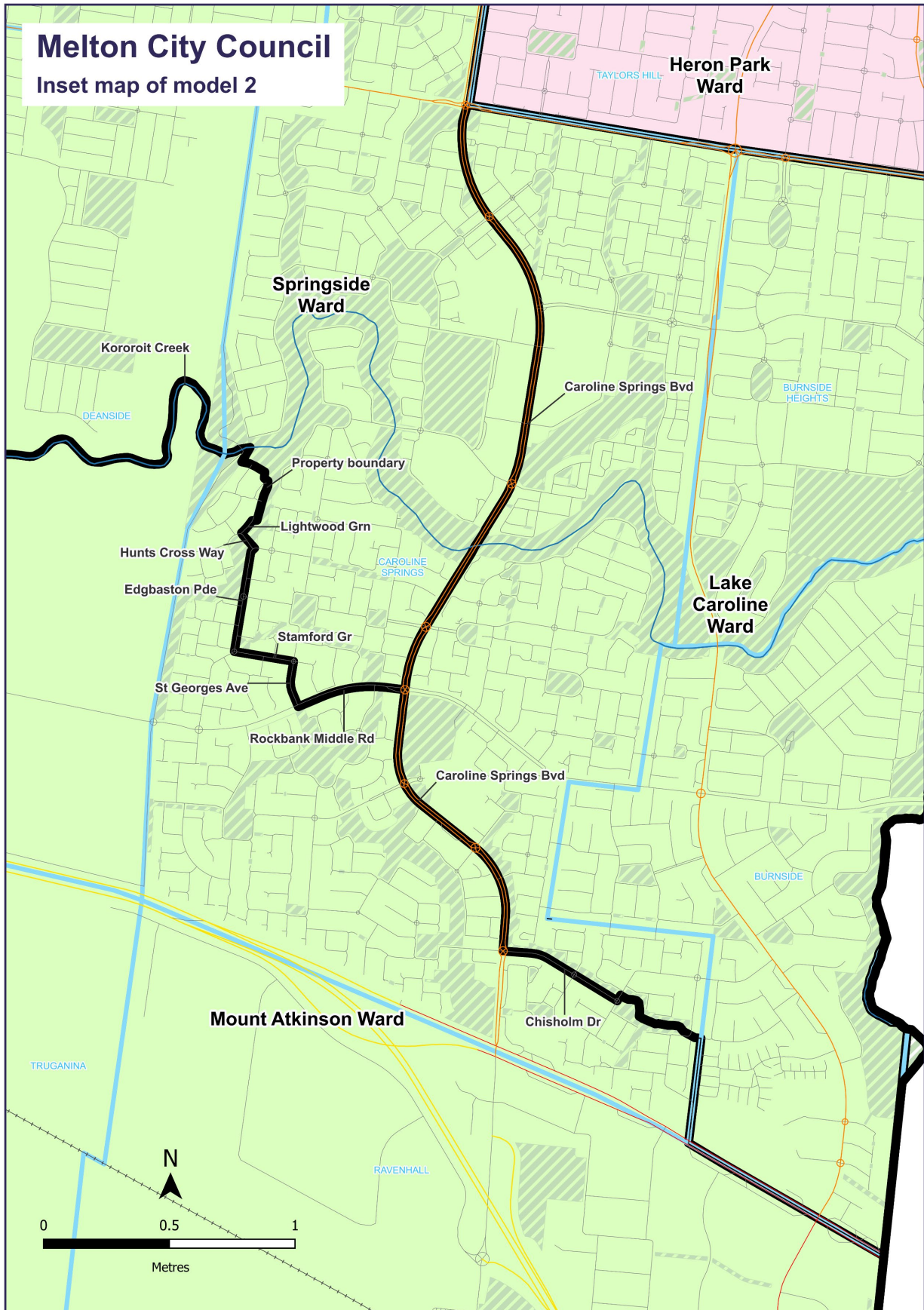
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Legend

- Proposed boundaries
- Existing ward(s)
 - Cambridge
 - Coburn
 - Watts
- Map symbols
 - Freeways
 - Collector roads
 - Main roads
 - Minor roads
 - Railways
 - Railway stations
 - Rivers & creeks
 - Lakes
 - Parks & reserves
 - Locality boundaries





Data for Model 2

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area# (square km)
Coolibah Ward	14,808	+10.42%	85.5
Heron Park Ward	13,497	+0.64%	5.8
Hilltop Ward	14,602	+8.88%	89.6
Lake Caroline Ward	13,212	-1.48%	7.2
Mount Atkinson Ward	12,264	-8.55%	79.4
Oakbridge Ward	11,749	-12.39%	66.1
Springside Ward	13,099	-2.32%	27.0
Stringybark Ward	13,878	+3.48%	70.4
Yangardook Ward	13,587	+1.31%	96.7
Total	120,696	n/a	527.7
Average	13,411	n/a	58.6

*Elector numbers as 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 (e.g. ABS).

Melton City Council

Model 3

10 single-councillor wards



Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area sq km
Bullum Bullum	12,529	+3.81%	12.8
Cambrian	13,219	+9.52%	20.7
Coolibah	10,537	-12.7%	79
Fieldstone	8,968	-25.7%	117.6
Hilltop	11,660	-3.39%	141.3
Jackwood	11,232	-6.94%	30
Lake Caroline	13,872	+14.93%	8.3
Stringybark	12,336	+2.21%	78.2
Sugar Gum	13,961	+15.67%	7.9
Watts	12,382	+2.59%	31.9
Total	120,696		527.7
Average	12,070		52.8

*Elector numbers as at 25 July 2023

Data use:

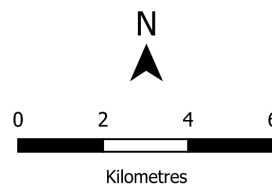


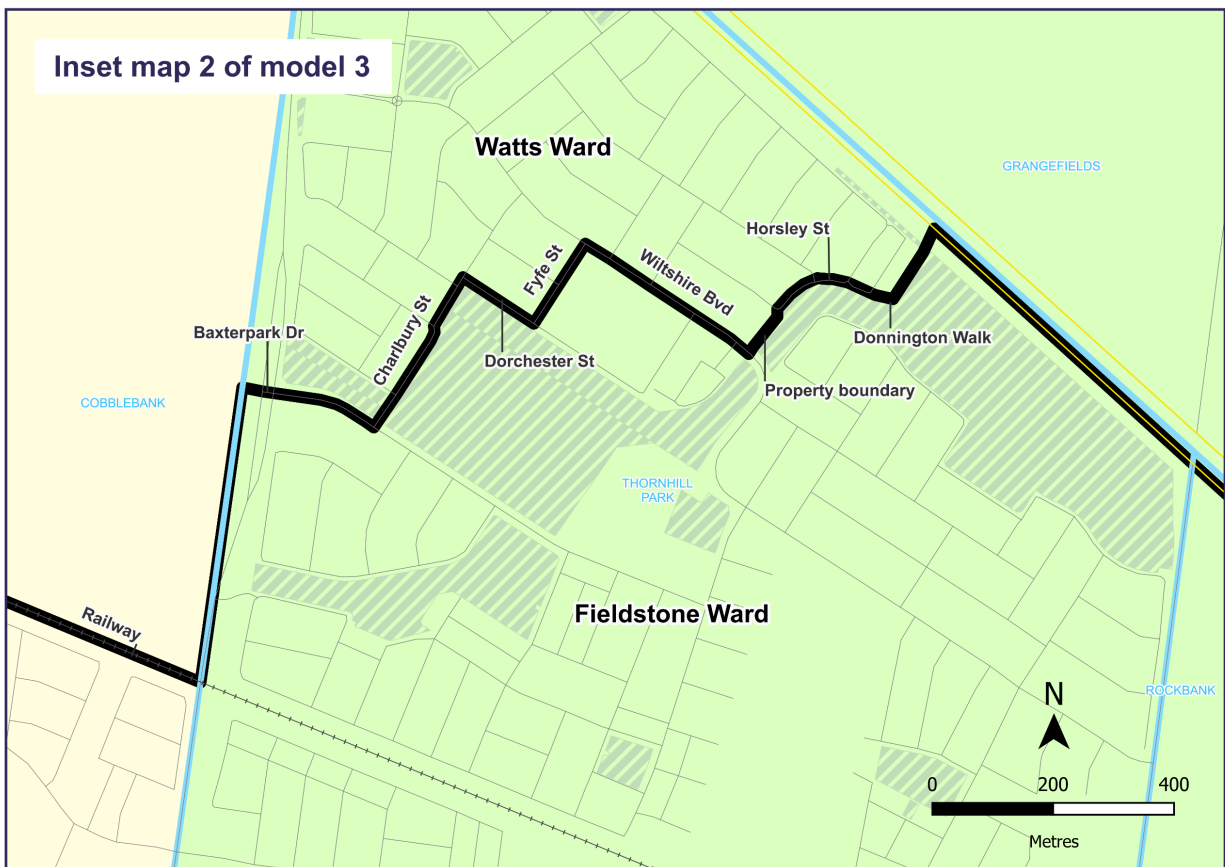
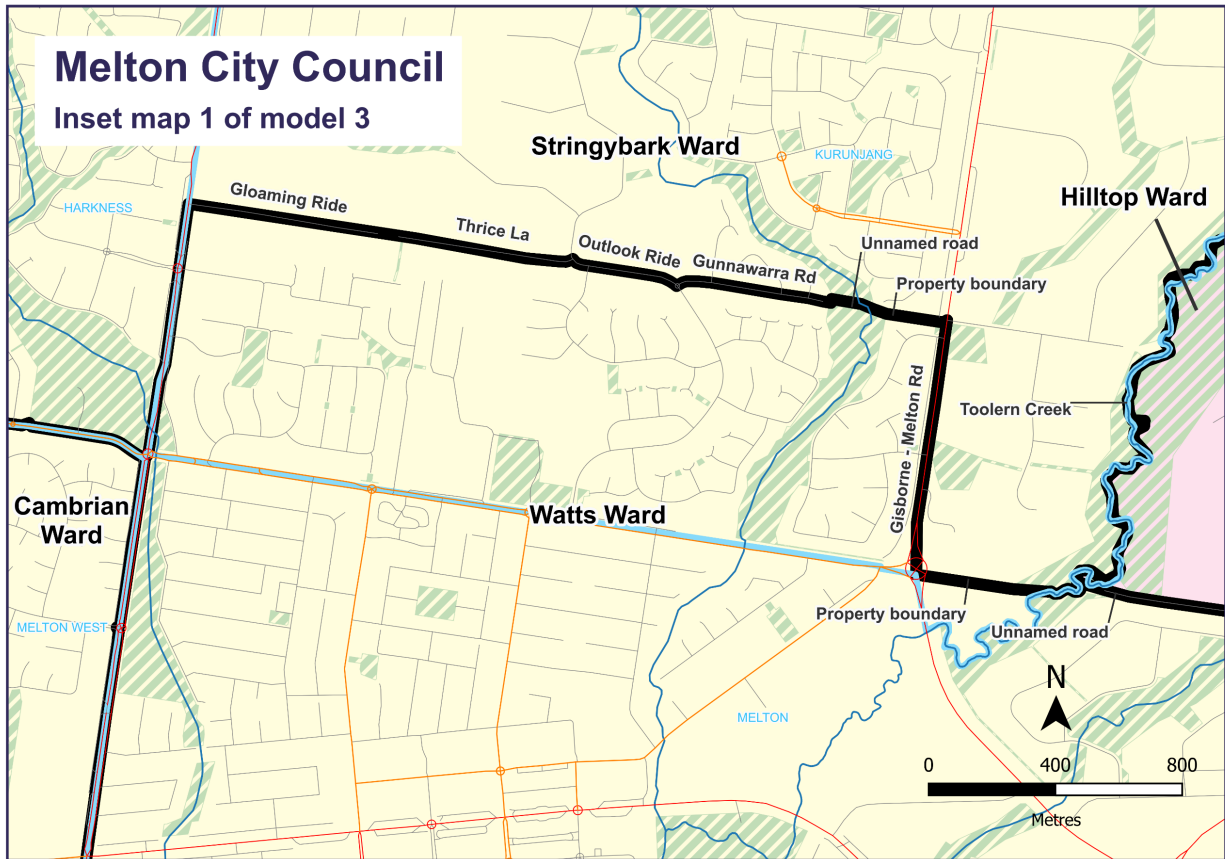
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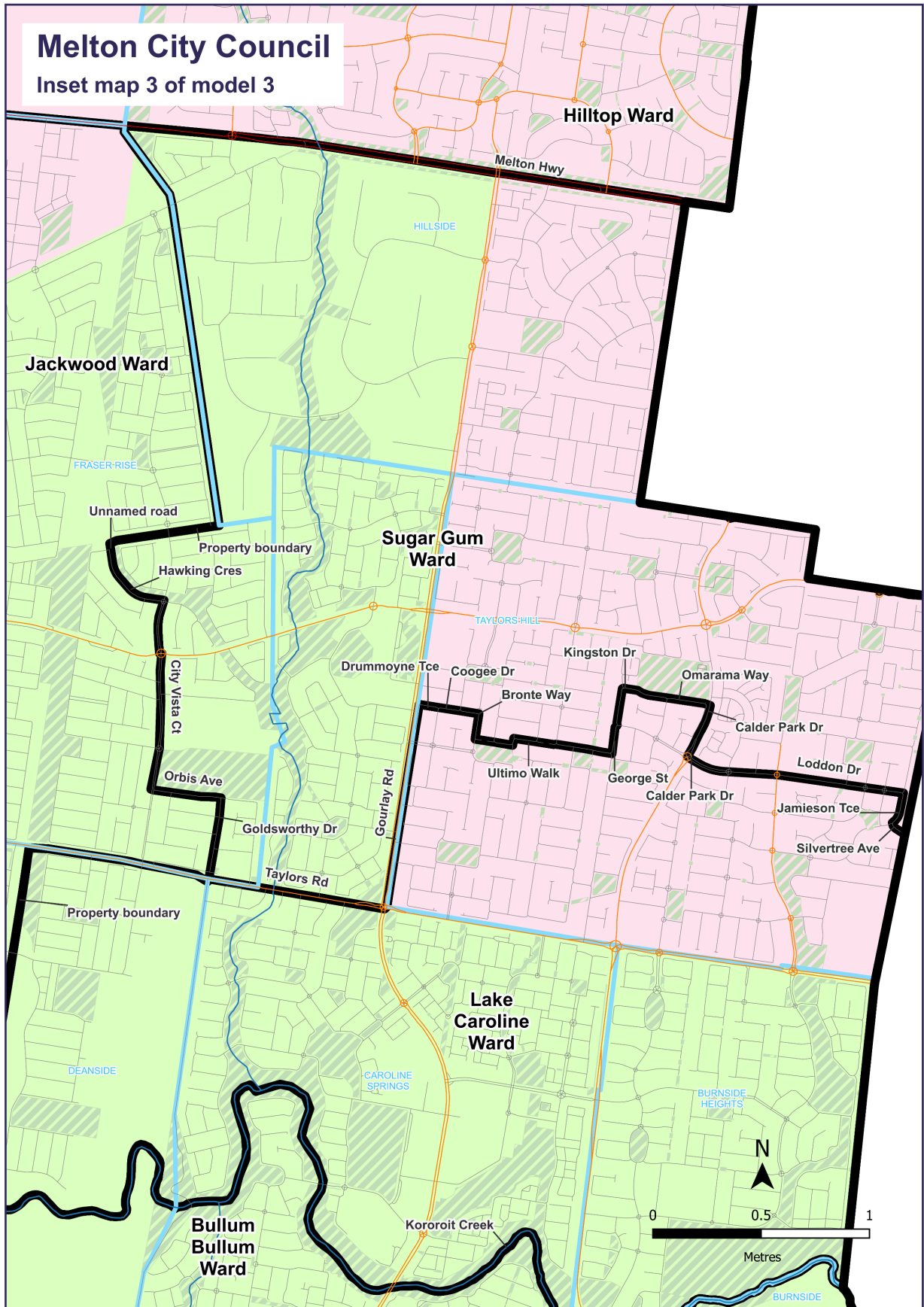
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Legend

- Proposed boundaries
- Existing ward(s)**
 - Cambridge
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 - Freeways
 - Collector roads
 - Main roads
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 - Railways
 - Railway stations
 - Rivers & creeks
 - Lakes
 - Parks & reserves
 - Locality boundaries







Data for Model 3

Ward	Electors*	Deviation	Area# (square km)
Bullum Bullum Ward	12,529	+3.81%	12.8
Cambrian Ward	13,219	+9.52%	20.7
Coolibah Ward	10,537	-12.7%	79.0
Fieldstone Ward	8,968	-25.7%	117.6
Hilltop Ward	11,660	-3.39%	141.3
Jackwood Ward	11,232	-6.94%	30.0
Lake Caroline Ward	13,872	+14.93%	8.3
Stringybark Ward	12,336	+2.21%	78.2
Sugar Gum Ward	13,961	+15.67%	7.9
Watts Ward	12,382	+2.59%	31.9
Total	120,696	n/a	527.7
Average	12,019	n/a	57.2

*Elector numbers as 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 (e.g. ABS).

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