

Local council electoral structure review

Final Report

Buloke Shire Council

May 2023

Revised July 2023

Acknowledgement of Country

The electoral representation advisory panel acknowledges the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagalk and Dja Dja Wurrung 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.

Document history and version control

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1	5 May 2023	Acting Deputy Electoral Commissioner	Final version
2	21 July 2023	Program Sponsor	Revised version with inclusion of good governance wording

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Executive summary

An independent electoral structure review panel appointed by the Minister for Local Government has reviewed the electoral structure of Buloke Shire Council.

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

The panel looked at:

- whether the council had an appropriate number of councillors
- whether it should be unsubdivided or subdivided
- appropriate ward names.

This report presents the panel's final advice to the Minister on the recommended new electoral structure of Buloke Shire Council to meet the requirements of Victoria's *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act).

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

Recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Buloke Shire Council adopt a multi-councillor ward structure, with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.

The recommended names for the 3 wards in this electoral structure are Lower Avoca Ward, Mallee Ward and Mount Jeffcott Ward.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the Act.

Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed map of this recommended electoral structure.

Summary of approach

Developing electoral structure models

The panel considered a range of factors when deciding on its final recommendation including:

- research and analysis
- voter growth or decline over time
- public submissions (see below).

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

Preliminary submissions

The panel received 4 preliminary submissions. Of these, one submission included a map.

A summary of the preliminary submissions is contained in the preliminary report, available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Preliminary report

The panel published a preliminary report on Wednesday 15 March 2023 with the following electoral structure models for public consultation:

- Model 1: an unsubdivided electoral structure with 7 councillors.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.

The full preliminary report is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 3 submissions responding to the preliminary report.

A full analysis of response submissions received can be found on [page 15](#).

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 10 am on Wednesday 12 April 2023. Three people spoke at the hearing.

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 will take effect at the October 2024 elections.

The Act introduced several changes to local government representation, including the types of electoral structures local councils may have. Large and small rural shire councils (including Buloke Shire Council) can have one of 3 electoral structures:

- unsubdivided (entire council area with no wards)
- single-councillor wards
- multi-councillor wards with the same number of councillors per ward.

For Buloke Shire Council, the electoral representation advisory panel examined:

- the number of councillors
- whether the council should be subdivided into wards or unsubdivided.

For subdivided structures, it also examined:

- the number of wards
- where the ward boundaries should be
- the names of each ward
- how many councillors should be elected for each ward.

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

The electoral representation advisory panel

The panel that conducted the electoral structure review of Buloke Shire Council had 3 members:

- The Honourable Frank Vincent AO KC (Chairperson)
- Ms Liz Williams PSM
- Electoral Commissioner Mr Warwick Gately AM (January to March 2023).

Upon Warwick Gately's retirement as Victoria's Electoral Commissioner, the following representatives of the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) were nominated as panel members:

- Director, Electoral Integrity and Regulation Mr Keegan Bartlett (April 2023)

- Acting Deputy Electoral Commissioner Ms Máiréad Doyle (May 2023).

The panel is independent of councils and the Victorian State government.

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 delegate) must be a member of each panel.

Public engagement

Public information program

To inform the public about the Buloke Shire Council electoral structure review, the VEC supported a public information and awareness program, which included:

- printing public notices in state-wide newspapers
- holding public information sessions to outline the review process and respond to questions from the community
- sending out media releases announcing the start of the review and the release of the preliminary and final reports
- publishing information on social media channels
- regularly updating the VEC website content on vec.vic.gov.au, with:
 - current information on the review process
 - submission guides and fact sheets for each council under review with background information
 - preliminary and response submissions from the public.

Public consultation

The panel encouraged public input to the review of Buloke Shire Council via:

- preliminary submissions at the start of the review
- response submissions to the preliminary report
- an online public hearing for anyone who made 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 panel's final recommendations 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)
- input received during public consultation.

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 the number of councillors is to be determined. As such, the recommendation put forward by the panel in this report is guided by the Act's intention for fairness and equity in voter representation and the consequent facilitation of good governance.

In examining the appropriate number of councillors for Buloke Shire 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 rural shire 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 communities of interest in the council area
- whether a particular type of electoral structure requiring a certain number of councillors would best suit the council (see 'Deciding the electoral structure' below)
- any matter raised in public submissions not already listed above.

Generally, local councils with a larger number of voters will have a higher number of councillors. Large populations are often more likely to 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 particular circumstances of a 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

The electoral structure of large and small rural shire councils can be:

- unsubdivided (entire council area with no wards)
 - made up of single-councillor wards
- or
- made up of multi-councillor wards with the same number of councillors per ward.

When developing electoral structure models for Buloke Shire 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 can be established and whether these would be easily identifiable to local communities
- 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 any wards
- past elections for the council, including:
 - numbers of candidates nominating
 - incidences of uncontested elections
 - rates of informal voting.
- other matters raised in public 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 aimed to recommend a structure that would comply with section 15(2) at the time of the 2024 local government elections and, if possible, also comply based on voter numbers at the time the review was conducted. The panel used 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 always possible to create a subdivided structure that complies with section 15(2) based on voter numbers that were current at the time of the review as well as forecast voter numbers. In these instances, the panel prioritised 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. Voters' rolls are a combination of state electors (making up the majority of a voters' roll) and a smaller number of ratepayer-based voting entitlements. The Act introduced changes to ratepayer-based entitlement categories, which come into full effect at the 2024 local government elections. As this will change the makeup of voters' rolls, and therefore compliance with section 15(2) of the Act, this is a consideration of the panel during this review.

Deciding on ward names

The panel has taken the following approach to naming wards.

1. Existing ward names were retained where possible and appropriate (if the name was still relevant to the area covered by a ward).
2. Where a new name was required, the panel based this on features such as:
 - places (as defined in the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*) located in the ward
 - compass directions
 - native flora or fauna.

Use of Aboriginal language

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

At the same time, the panel also recognises that many of the place names in current use across Victoria are based on Aboriginal language. As such, the panel has in some cases put forward new ward names using Aboriginal language, but only where this is the name of a place within a ward, it is currently in common use, and this name is registered under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (Vic). This is a practical solution to the reality that many of Victoria's geographic features are named using Aboriginal language.

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, an appropriate consultation process should be followed before doing so.

About Buloke Shire Council

Profile

Buloke Shire Council is located in the Murray-Mallee region of Victoria, approximately 300 kilometres north-west of Melbourne and 180 kilometres south-east of Mildura. The shire covers an area of 7,998 km², spanning about 200 km from north to south. It shares borders with Mildura and Swan Hill Rural City Councils to the north, Gannawarra and Loddon Shire Councils to the east, Northern Grampians Shire Council to the south and Yarriambiack Shire Council to the west.

The Traditional Custodians of the land in Buloke Shire are the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia, Jupagalk and Dja Dja Wurrung people.

Landscape

Buloke Shire Council comprises mostly farming land, but also important natural features, such as the Richardson and Avoca rivers and the significant wetlands of Lake Buloke, Lake Tyrrell and the Wooroonook Lakes (Department of Transport and Planning, 2022).

The Calder Highway and the Sunraysia Highway run north-south through the shire. They form part of an extensive road network, connecting the shire to Mildura and Swan Hill to the north and east, and to major regional centres south.

The shire has a population of 6,178 (ABS, 2021a), with the major towns of Birchip, Charlton, Donald, Sea Lake and Wycheproof comprising approximately 70%. The population is also distributed across smaller townships and on farms located throughout rural districts.

Community

Agriculture is a major industry in the shire, comprising 27% of total economic output for the council area (REMPLAN, 2023) and 30% of employment (ABS, 2021a). The main agricultural outputs include grain, such as wheat, oats and barley, and sheep grazing (REMPLAN, 2023). Health care and social assistance, education and training, retail and construction are other important industries of employment (REMPLAN, 2023).

Buloke Shire has an older age profile compared to regional Victoria. With a median age of 52, just over half of the population (53.2%) is aged over 50 years (ABS, 2021a), whereas for regional Victoria the median age is 43 years (ABS, 2021c). The shire's population declined modestly by approximately 4% between 2011 and 2021 (ABS, 2021c), with forecast population growth expected to be 0.7% annually from 2022 to 2028.

Of the population, 83.7% were born in Australia and 88.1% use only English at home (ABS, 2021a). Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent 1.5% of the population. Countries where most people were born overseas include England, New Zealand and the Philippines. Languages other than English most commonly spoken at home include Malayalam, Mandarin and Tagalog.

There is a high rate of home ownership amongst residents, as well as a high proportion of single person households. The median weekly household income of \$1,088 is lower than the average rate for regional Victoria of \$1,386 (ABS, 2021a; ABS, 2021c).

Current number of councillors and electoral structure

Buloke Shire Council is currently divided into 3 wards with a total of 7 councillors:

- one ward with 3 councillors (Mount Jeffcott)
- 2 wards with 2 councillors each (Mallee and Lower Avoca).

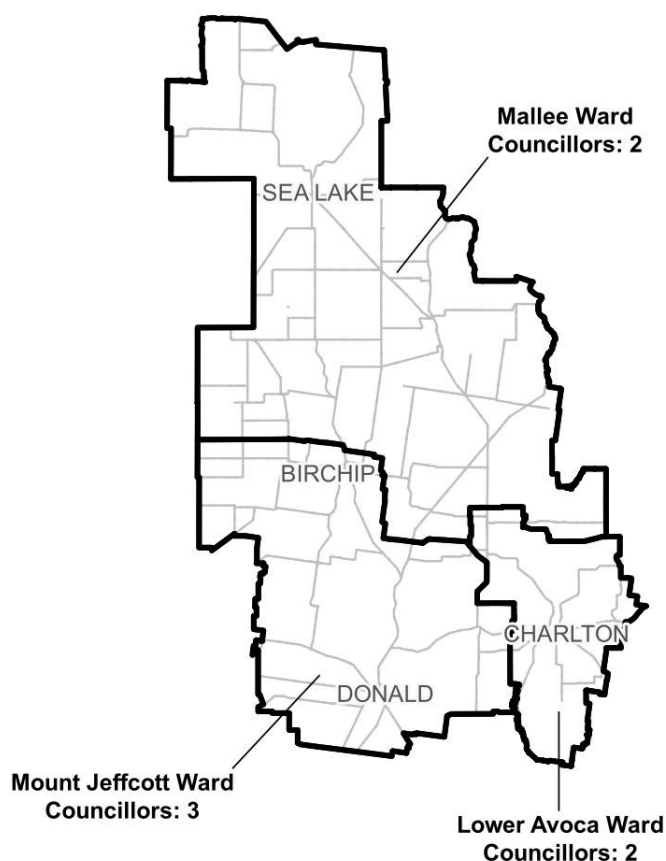


Figure 1: Diagram of current electoral structure of Buloke Shire Council.

There are currently approximately 5,249 voters in Buloke Shire Council, equating to a ratio of 750 voters per councillor.

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au for more information on Buloke Shire Council.

Last electoral structure review

The VEC conducted an electoral representation review of Buloke Shire Council in 2019. This representation review was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989*, which was replaced by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

After conducting the review, the VEC recommended that Buloke Shire Council continue to consist of 7 councillors elected from 3 wards (2 wards with 2 councillors and one ward with 3 councillors).

Visit the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au to access a copy of the 2019 representation review final report.

Prior to the 2019 review, a representation review of Buloke Shire Council was completed in 2007. This review resulted in the current electoral structure being implemented. Prior to the 2007 representation review, Buloke Shire Council was comprised of 9 councillors elected from 3 wards, each with 3 councillors.

Preliminary submissions

At the close of submissions on Wednesday 15 February 2023, the panel had received 4 submissions for the electoral structure review of Buloke Shire Council. You can find a list of people who made a preliminary submission in [Appendix 2](#).

The panel received submissions from a range of stakeholders including individuals, a current councillor and Buloke Shire Council. Submissions were published on the VEC website.

A summary of the preliminary submissions is contained in the preliminary report, available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Preliminary report

A preliminary report was released on Wednesday 15 March 2023. The panel considered public submissions and research findings when formulating the models presented in the preliminary report.

After careful consideration, the following electoral structure models were put forward for public consultation:

- Model 1: an unsubdivided electoral structure with 7 councillors.
- Model 2: a subdivided electoral structure with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.

The full preliminary report is available on the VEC website at vec.vic.gov.au

Response submissions

The panel received 3 response submissions to the preliminary report from the public by the deadline of 5 pm on Wednesday 5 April 2023. You can find a list of people or organisations who made a response submission in [Appendix 2](#).

The table below provides an overview of preferences in response submissions. You can read an analysis of submissions below this table.

Table 1: Preferences expressed in response submissions	
Model 1 (unsubdivided, 7 councillors)	Model 2 (3 wards with 2 councillors per ward)
1	2

Model 1

Consistent with its preliminary submission, Buloke Shire Council favoured Model 1 as the most appropriate structure for effective representation and the best compromise given the new requirements of the Act. It suggested that an unsubdivided structure would provide voters with a greater number of councillors to choose from at elections, and by allowing voters to elect candidates for the entire shire, would reduce the potential for uncontested or unopposed elections. The council suggested this would enhance opportunities for all voters to decide the composition of council.

Model 1 was also favoured by the council in light of councillor workloads. It argued that a structure with 7 councillors was the most appropriate due to the size of the shire and its service or infrastructure needs. The council proposed that any reduction in councillor numbers would increase councillor workloads and thus impact the quality of representation they were able to provide. It suggested that the council already had processes to support a shire-wide approach and by holding council meetings in locations throughout the shire, did not consider the potential of increased travel requirements for councillors to be an issue. The council also preferred an odd number of councillors, as it felt this would provide for equitable decision-making and a greater chance that council decisions would be made by a majority vote.

In contrast, Councillor Bernadette Hogan suggested there to be little support in the community for an unsubdivided electoral structure, and that this option would leave some areas of the shire with a perceived lack of representation, particularly in the north. Martin Duke was also of the view that an unsubdivided structure would not adequately represent all of the shire's communities and that Model 1 would be detrimental to local representation.

Model 2

Hogan suggested there to be strong levels of community support for Model 2 and the retention of a subdivided structure would best represent the shire's rural communities and major

townships. Hogan also argued the current structure had served the council well, with strong local representation enabled by the 3-ward structure. Duke outlined the benefits of having candidates and councillors connected to their local communities, which Model 2 was seen to continue to provide. It was argued that voters prefer candidates who reside in their local area and that this enables voters to have a strong connection with their elected representatives.

Duke supported Model 2 but proposed increasing councillor numbers to 9 (or 3 per ward) to better reflect the demands placed on councillors connecting and representing their communities, often over large distances. However, Duke still considered Model 2 the better option for managing these demands, as having representation for specific geographical areas enabled councillors to more effectively communicate and engage with voters within their ward. Duke also suggested the ward structure facilitated the election of candidates knowledgeable of and responsive to local interests and was therefore the best structure for representing the shire's various communities of interest.

Hogan did not see a reduction to 6 councillors as likely to have a significant impact on workload, and that voters would in fact welcome the reduced costs of such a change. Furthermore, having an even number of councillors was not in Hogan's view an issue in terms of council decision-making.

In opposition to Model 2, the council argued it would increase councillor workloads to the detriment of effective representation. The council also suggested that having 6 councillors would make decision-making at council meetings problematic and that such a reduction would be inconsistent with the approach and decisions made on the number of councillors for other, similar-sized rural councils.

Public hearing

The panel held an online public hearing for those wishing to speak about their response submission at 10 am on Wednesday 12 April 2023.

Three people spoke at the hearing. You can find a list of people who spoke at the hearing in [Appendix 2](#).

The below section summarises the arguments presented by each of the three speakers.

Mayor Alan R Getley spoke on behalf of the council's submission, reaffirming its support for Model 1 mainly because it kept the same number of councillors at 7. The Council was concerned that reducing the number of councillors would increase councillor workloads. In support of this point the mayor stated that, for council-wide events such as ANZAC commemorations, councillors could not currently cover attendance for all significant townships of the shire. He suggested this issue would be further exacerbated if councillor numbers were reduced.

Councillor Hogan spoke of her current and previous (2005 to 2008) experience as a councillor to highlight the importance of local accountability and representation. In contrast to the council's submission, Hogan indicated that in her view the subdivided, multi-councillor ward model (Model 2) supported these democratic principles best. While acknowledging Model 2 would see a reduction in councillor numbers from 7 to 6, Hogan suggested councillor workloads would be largely unchanged, as the council had regularly functioned with only 6 councillors due to legitimate absences (such as councillors being unwell or on leave).

The third speaker, Martin Duke, spoke in support of Model 2, highlighting his experience working for other regional councils in Victoria. Duke described Buloke as sitting between several major regional centres, none of which fell within the shire's borders. According to Duke, the townships of Buloke had an affinity with different regional centres outside the shire, depending on their location. Because of the large distances between Buloke's towns, each had developed its own identity, often in connection with the regional city it was closest to and the services its residents accessed. For these reasons Duke felt a subdivided ward structure would better suit the various communities of interest within the shire.

Findings and recommendation

Number of councillors

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found either 6 or 7 councillors to be an appropriate number for Buloke Shire Council.

The panel considered the characteristics of Buloke Shire Council in relation to similar rural shire councils, including its size and geography, population and the number and distribution of voters across the shire.

Buloke Shire Council currently has 5,249 voters represented by 7 councillors and covers an area of 7,998 km². Other rural shires with a similar number of voters have 5 to 7 councillors, however Buloke Shire sits right at the bottom range of councils with 7 councillors, which may justify a reduction when considered alongside the shire's forecast population decline (-0.7% per annum). A reduction to 6 councillors would increase the voter-to-councillor ratio to 875, which is still below but compares well with similar rural councils. Considering this, the shire's forecast population decline and the fact that similar councils have 5 to 7 councillors, an increase to 9 councillors (proposed by one submitter) is not considered appropriate. Overall, the panel considered either 6 or 7 councillors as appropriate for Buloke Shire Council.

In some cases, a local council may have special circumstances that support a recommendation for fewer or more councillors. While the panel did not identify any special circumstances that were new to Buloke Shire Council since the representation review in 2019, the panel identified possible benefits of a subdivided electoral structure in light of particular geographic features and uneven distribution of voters across the shire. Nonetheless, it recognised the challenges and possible drawbacks of developing a satisfactory subdivided electoral structure for Buloke. The Act's requirement for multi-councillor ward structures to have the same number of councillors per ward also poses difficulties, as multi-councillor ward structures are not possible with the current number of councillors. Because of this, the panel also considered subdivided electoral structures with fewer councillors and explored whether such a decrease would be justified based on the benefits a subdivided ward structure would bring to representing the shire's communities and voters. As a result, the panel put forward one option with a decreased number of councillors: Model 2.

Electoral structure

After considering the requirements of the Act, public submissions and the agreed criteria, the panel found Model 2 to be the best model for promoting fair and equitable representation for voters in Buloke Shire Council and consequently facilitate good governance.

The panel considered all arguments in favour of and against the 2 preliminary models in coming to its final decision. It identified the benefits of Model 1 in keeping 7 councillors and acknowledged there might be some impacts of reducing councillor numbers on workloads. However, it also considered that reducing councillor numbers to 6 would be consistent with similar rural councils. Indeed, having 2 councillors in each ward, as in Model 2, may allow the 2

councillors to share and manage community engagement and attendance at various events over a specific geographic area. Further, the panel was aware the council in its current structure had occasionally operated with 6 councillors to due illness or leave, and to the panel's knowledge this had not presented major issues.

The panel considered the merits of both models to encourage a whole-of-council approach and sense of common purpose in council business. The panel took the view that neither model would necessarily promote this better than the other, noting that the current councillors appeared to already take a council-wide approach. Nonetheless, on the issue of strong local representation for the shire's various communities, which had been fostered under the current structure, the panel determined Model 2 to be the most favourable. According to the arguments and information presented in public submissions, the panel formed a view that there were strong and distinct communities captured by the proposed divided structure and that local identity and accountability was important to these communities. The panel also noted that serving a somewhat sparse but evenly spread population distributed across a large area may be more easily managed under a ward-based structure.

Model 2 was considered to resemble the current structure which appears to be working well. The panel notes, however, the necessary boundary changes, such as shifting the Lower Avoca-Mallee ward boundary north and the Mount Jeffcott Ward boundary south to accommodate the change to 2 councillors per ward. No opposition was presented on these boundary changes and the panel considered the benefits overall of Model 2 to outweigh the possible drawbacks of reducing councillor numbers to 6.

The panel was concerned, however, about the greater risk of uncontested or unopposed elections in Model 2. Mallee Ward was uncontested at both the 2020 and 2016 Local Government elections, but the panel felt this was counter-balanced by a high level of competition at the 2022 Mallee Ward by-election where voters could choose from 6 candidates. The increased number of voters in the new Mallee Ward may also lead to an increased number of locals nominating from within the ward. Additionally, reducing the number of councillors to 6 may also help alleviate the risk of uncontested elections. The panel noted that it is ultimately up to community members to nominate and stand as candidates for election, and electoral structures alone cannot be responsible for the contestability of elections.

There are valid arguments both in favour of and against the unsubdivided and subdivided electoral structures examined in this review, as each have their own benefits and drawbacks. While it is not possible for an electoral structure to address all the issues at play in the shire, the panel considers that, on balance, Model 2 is the best model for promoting fair and equitable representation for voters in Buloke Shire Council and consequently facilitate good governance under the requirements of the Act.

Ward names

The ward names for the panel's recommended electoral structure were based on the following:

- Lower Avoca Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. It covers much of the same area as this existing ward.
- Mallee Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. It covers much of the same area as this existing ward.
- Mount Jeffcott Ward: The existing name of the ward under the current electoral structure. It covers much of the same area as this existing ward.

Further, of the 2 submissions in favour of a 3-ward structure, one specifically stated support for continued use of the current ward names, whereas the other raised no objections. No proposals for new ward names were made at the response stage. As such and given the ward boundaries of Model 2 closely resemble those of the current structure, the panel sees no reason to change any of the ward names at this point of the review.

The panel's recommendation

The electoral representation advisory panel recommends that Buloke Shire Council adopt a multi-councillor ward structure, with a total of 6 councillors, 3 wards and 2 councillors per ward.

The recommended names for the 3 wards in this electoral structure are Lower Avoca Ward, Mallee Ward, Mount Jeffcott Ward.

This advice is submitted to the Minister for Local Government as required by the Terms of Reference of the electoral representation advisory panel and the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic). This electoral structure was designated as Model 2 in the preliminary report.

Please see [Appendix 1](#) for a detailed map of this recommended electoral structure.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2021a). [Census 2021 Community Profiles](#), Buloke, ABS website, accessed 28 February 2023.

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Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)

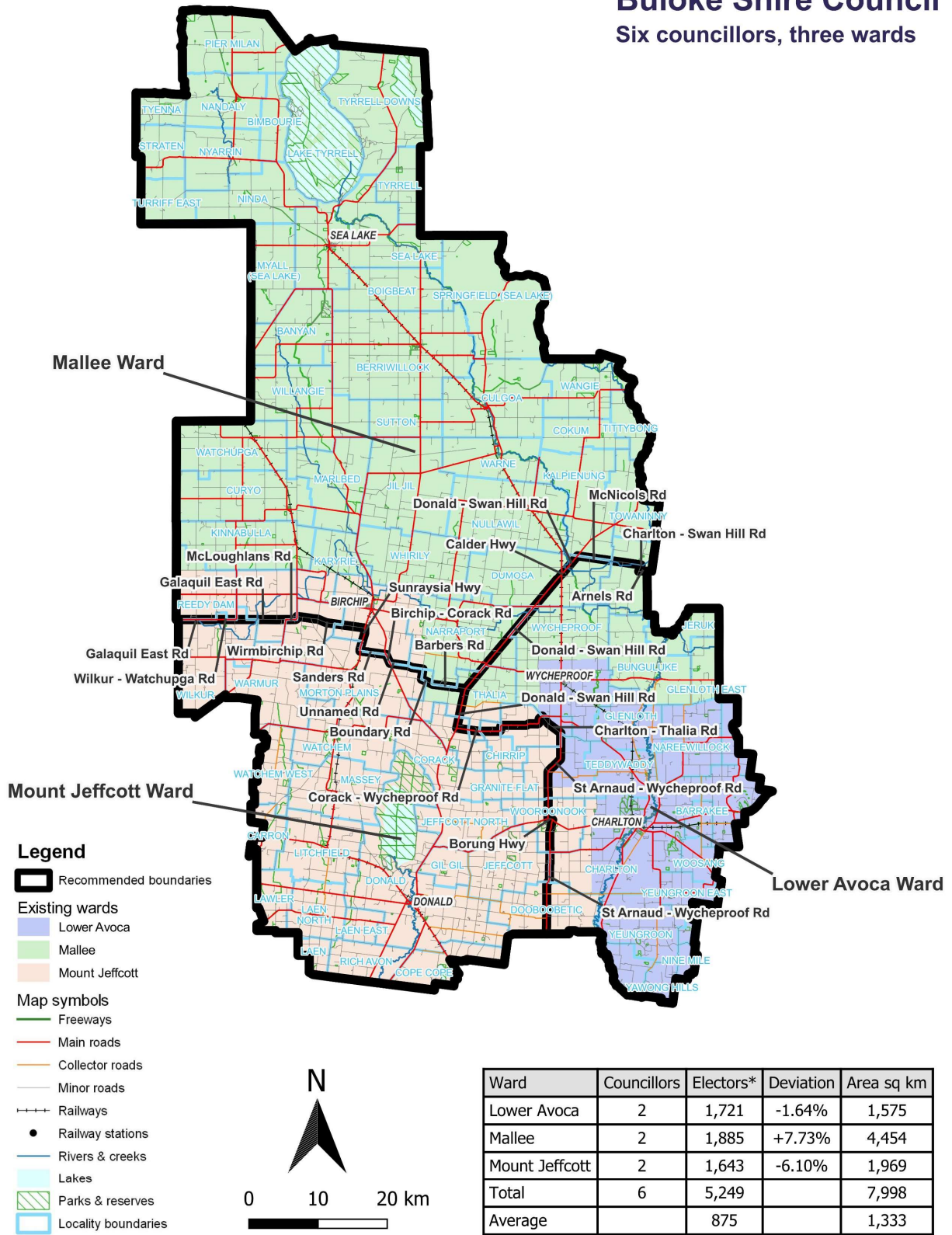
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Appendix 1: Map of recommended structure

Buloke Shire Council
Six councillors, three wards



Map prepared by:
VEC Victorian Electoral Commission

Data use:
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Appendix 2: Public involvement

The panel wishes to thank all submitters to the review and speakers at the public hearing for their participation in the review process.

Preliminary submissions

Preliminary submissions were made by:

Buloke Shire Council

Duke, Martin

Getley, Alan Kelvin

Hogan, Bernadette (Councillor)

Response submissions

Response submissions were made by:

Buloke Shire Council

Duke, Martin

Hogan, Bernadette (Councillor)

Public hearing

The following people spoke at the public hearing:

Getley, Alan R (Mayor, on behalf of Buloke Shire Council)

Duke, Martin

Hogan, Bernadette (Councillor)

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