LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION

> Review of Divisional Boundaries

**2023 FINAL REPORT** ISAAC REGIONAL COUNCIL

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## Introduction

The Local Government Change Commission (Change Commission) has finalised its assessment of the Isaac Regional Council's divisional boundaries to be implemented for the 2024 local government elections. This report outlines the recommended divisional boundaries and sets out the reasons for the Change Commission's decisions. Maps of the final divisional boundaries are attached at **Appendix 1**.

## About the Change Commission

The Change Commission is an independent body established under the *Local Government Act 2009*. The Change Commission is responsible for periodically reviewing the internal boundaries of divided councils so that each division has relatively the same number of enrolled electors. This upholds the key democratic principle of 'one vote, one value', by ensuring each person's vote carries the same weight.

The Change Commission performs its functions independently and is administratively supported through the Electoral Commission of Queensland (ECQ).

The Change Commission for this review consisted of:

- Mr Pat Vidgen PSM, Electoral Commissioner
- Mr Wade Lewis GAICD, Casual Commissioner
- Ms Jennifer Lang, Casual Commissioner
- Mr Peter McGraw, Casual Commissioner.

The casual commissioners were appointed by the Governor in Council on 1 November 2021.

## About the review

In the year before each local government quadrennial election, divided councils must be reviewed to determine whether their divisions are within the legislatively prescribed quota with approximately the same number of electors.<sup>1</sup>

On 1 March 2023, the Isaac Regional Council wrote to the Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure (Deputy Premier) informing him that the number of electors in Divisions 1, 2 and 8 are not within the legislatively prescribed quota<sup>2</sup> (**Appendix 2**).

In accordance with sections 18 and 19 of the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Deputy Premier referred the Isaac Regional Council to the Change Commission to prepare new divisional boundaries.

# Methodology

Each division is required to have a 'reasonable proportion of electors', also known as a 'quota'. The quota is determined by dividing the total number of electors in a local government area by the number of councillors (excluding the mayor). This calculation provides the average number of electors per division. For a local government area with more than 10,000 electors, the quota for each division must remain within plus or minus 10 per cent of the average number of electors<sup>3</sup>.

Table 1 shows the enrolment, quota and allowable deviation from the quota for the Isaac Regional Council as at 9 March 2023 as well as the projected figures for 31 March 2028.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> s16(a) Local Government Act 2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> s15(2)(b) Local Government Act 2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> s15(2)(b) Local Government Act 2009

Table 1 – Current and projected enrolment quota		
	9 March 2023	31 March 2028
Number of divisions	8	8
Enrolment	11,852	11,969
Average enrolment per division	1,481	1,496
Lower limit (-10%) per division	1,333	1,347
Upper limit (+10%) per division	1,630	1,646

In addition to ensuring each division's enrolment is within the quota, the Change Commission takes into consideration a number of other factors when determining the final boundaries. These considerations include:

- projected enrolment data for each division prepared by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office (based on enrolment data as at 9 March 2023) to reduce the likelihood that divisional boundaries will require change in the future
- natural and constructed markers such as rivers and roads
- the council's advice on proposed boundaries, and
- suggestions and feedback arising from public consultation.

The Change Commission also takes other administrative factors into consideration when determining the final divisional boundaries. These factors include, where practicable, not splitting Statistical Areas level 1 (SA1s)<sup>4</sup> and ensuring entire localities are within the same division. The Change Commission will also (if appropriate) reunite previously split localities and SA1s, to create administrative and operational efficiencies in electoral roll administration.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> SA1s are geographic areas defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the organisation of census data and are used for the administration of enrolment information

## The review process

The Change Commission may conduct its assessment in any way it deems appropriate<sup>5</sup>, unless the Deputy Premier provides specific directions<sup>6</sup>.

The process for this review was:

- 1. Invite a submission from the Isaac Regional Council.
- 2. Prepare a proposal for new divisional boundaries based on insights from the council submission and other considerations outlined in the methodology.
- 3. Publish the Change Commission's proposal for new divisional boundaries.
- 4. Invite public submissions on the proposal.
- 5. Publish the Change Commission's final recommendation and report.
- 6. Provide the final report to the Deputy Premier, for implementation by the Governor in Council by Regulation.

The new divisional boundaries do not take effect until the 2024 local government elections.

For the divisional boundary review of the Isaac Regional Council, the Deputy Premier did not provide any specific directions.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> S19(3) Local Government Act 2009

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> s19(4) *Local Government Act 2009* 

# Existing divisions

As at 9 March 2023, the Isaac Regional Council had 11,852 enrolled voters and was divided into eight single-member divisions, plus a mayor.

Table 2 shows the current and projected enrolment for the council's existing divisional boundaries. As at 9 March 2023, enrolment in Divisions 1, 2 and 8 had deviated by more than 10 per cent from the quota. This required the Change Commission to prepare new divisional boundaries to ensure enrolment was within allowable thresholds. It is further projected that, based on current boundaries, Divisions 1 and 8 will be further out of quota by 2028.

Table 2 – Summary of enrolment for the existing divisions				
Division	Enrolment as at 9 March 2023	Deviation from average enrolment	Projected enrolment as at 31 March 2028	Projected deviation from average enrolment
Division 1	1,277	-13.80%	1,281	-14.38%
Division 2	1,635	10.36%	1,600	6.94%
Division 3	1,426	-3.75%	1,515	1.26%
Division 4	1,493	0.78%	1,468	-1.88%
Division 5	1,487	0.37%	1,543	3.13%
Division 6	1,389	-6.24%	1,375	-8.10%
Division 7	1,459	-1.52%	1,460	-2.41%
Division 8	1,686	13.80%	1,727	15.43%

\* In the table above, percentage deviations above the average enrolment are in black; percentage deviations below the average enrolment are in red; and percentage deviations outside the plus or minus 10 per cent threshold are bolded.

Maps of the existing divisions are provided in **Appendix 3**.

# Proposed divisional boundaries

In July 2023, the Change Commission released proposed divisional boundary maps for public consultation. To develop the proposed boundaries, the Change Commission used current and projected enrolment data and sought to align divisional boundaries with existing locality boundaries. While the Change Commission did not receive a submission from the Isaac Regional Council, it did consider previous submissions from the council on the 2019 divisional boundary reviews<sup>7</sup> and the council's correspondence with the Deputy Premier regarding the current review (refer to **Appendix 2**). In particular, the Change Commission noted that, in its letter dated 1 March 2023, the Isaac Regional Council requested that towns and communities not be split where possible, when considering any divisional boundary changes.

To bring the Isaac Regional Council divisional enrolment within allowable thresholds, the Change Commission proposed the following changes:

- a. the entire localities of Gemini Mountains and Wolfang to be transferred from Division 2 to Division 1
- b. the locality of Coppabella to be transferred from Division 8 to Division 1
- c. the balance of the locality of Clermont to be transferred from Division 2 to Division 1, reuniting the entire locality into one division
- d. the Valkyrie locality to be transferred from Division 8 to Division 7.

The proposed changes are forecast to affect approximately 229 electors across four divisions.

No changes were proposed to the boundaries of Divisions 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The proposed changes do not create new divisional boundaries that split towns or communities. However, Moranbah is currently split across several divisions, including Division 7, and this arrangement has been maintained to balance elector numbers across divisions.

The relatively small population, mostly concentrated in two townships, combined with the unique geographical features of the region, presented challenges to the Change Commission in realigning the boundaries to satisfy the legislated enrolment thresholds. Minor population movements can result in divisional enrolment falling outside allowable thresholds, in turn making accurate population projections difficult compared to other local government areas.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> <u>https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/local-government-boundary-reviews/divisional-boundary-reviews/isaac-regional-council</u>

## Consultation and outcomes

To assist and inform its assessment, the Change Commission conducted consultation with the public to seek their views on the proposed divisional boundaries.

The proposed divisional boundaries were made publicly available and submissions from the community were requested from 31 July 2023 to 14 August 2023. Advertisements about the proposed divisional boundaries and public consultation were placed in the Mackay Daily Mercury and on the ECQ's website and social media channels. Electors who had provided an email address on the electoral roll were also emailed information about the proposed changes and invited to make a submission.

Submissions could be made by any person via post, email or online form. This allowed any interested party, including residents and stakeholders to provide their views for consideration by the Change Commission.

Submissions suitable for release were published on the ECQ's website following the conclusion of the consultation period in accordance with the publication guidelines for the review. A copy of the publication guidelines is at **Appendix 4**.

A total of two submissions were received and are at **Appendix 5**.

Both submissions raised concerns about the cost of implementing a divisional boundary change and suggested the current boundaries remain unchanged. However, this was not considered feasible given three divisions have enrolment outside the allowable thresholds.

## Conclusion

The Change Commission took into consideration the submissions received, noting that neither provided alternative options to balance divisional enrolment in the Isaac Regional Council. After assessing the available information, including the current and projected enrolment, and having considered the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Change Commission recommends that the proposed boundaries become the final divisions for the Isaac Regional Council.

The Change Commission notes that, due to the low number of electors in the Isaac local government area, relatively small population changes can have a significant impact on divisional enrolment, and that a further boundary review may be required before the 2028 elections. While the Change Commission has considered projected enrolment, its priority is to ensure all divisions are within quota for the 2024 local government elections.

Implementation of this recommendation is expected to result in the following divisional enrolment, as set out in Table 3 overleaf.

Given the ongoing difficulties in maintaining divisional enrolment within the allowable quota and the need to undertake regular divisional boundary reviews for the Isaac Regional Council, the Change Commission also recommends the council and its community consider whether retaining divisions is desirable into the future. The council may wish to consider whether alternative electoral arrangements, such as an undivided council or multi-member divisions, would serve the needs of the community.

•	Table 3 – Summa	ary of enrolment	for the final divisi	ons
Division	Enrolment as at 9 March 2023	Deviation from average enrolment	Projected enrolment as at 31 March 2028	Projected deviation from average enrolment
Division 1	1,449	-2.19%	1,457	-2.61%
Division 2	1,546	4.35%	1,507	0.73%
Division 3	1,426	-3.75%	1,515	1.26%
Division 4	1,493	0.78%	1,468	-1.88%
Division 5	1,487	0.37%	1,543	3.13%
Division 6	1,389	-6.24%	1,375	-8.10%
Division 7	1,516	2.33%	1,515	1.26%
Division 8	1,546	4.35%	1,589	6.20%

\* In the table above, percentage deviations above the average enrolment are in black and percentage deviations below the average enrolment are in red.

Maps of the proposed new Isaac Regional Council divisional boundaries are provided in **Appendix 1**.

\*The final boundaries also reflect recommendations of the Change Commission in the <u>2022</u> <u>Barcaldine Regional Council and adjoining councils external boundary review</u>, which was implemented by the Governor in Council by Regulation in June 2023.

## Recommendation

The Change Commission's final recommendation is as follows:

• for the purpose of the 2024 local government elections, the Isaac Regional Council be redivided into eight divisions as shown in the maps at **Appendix 1**.

The results of the Change Commission's review have been provided to the Deputy Premier for implementation by Regulation.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009*, the Change Commission has published a notice of results in the Queensland Government Gazette and on the ECQ's website.

Pat Vidgen PSM Electoral Commissioner

Wade Lewis GAICD Casual Commissioner

Jennifer Lang Casual Commissioner

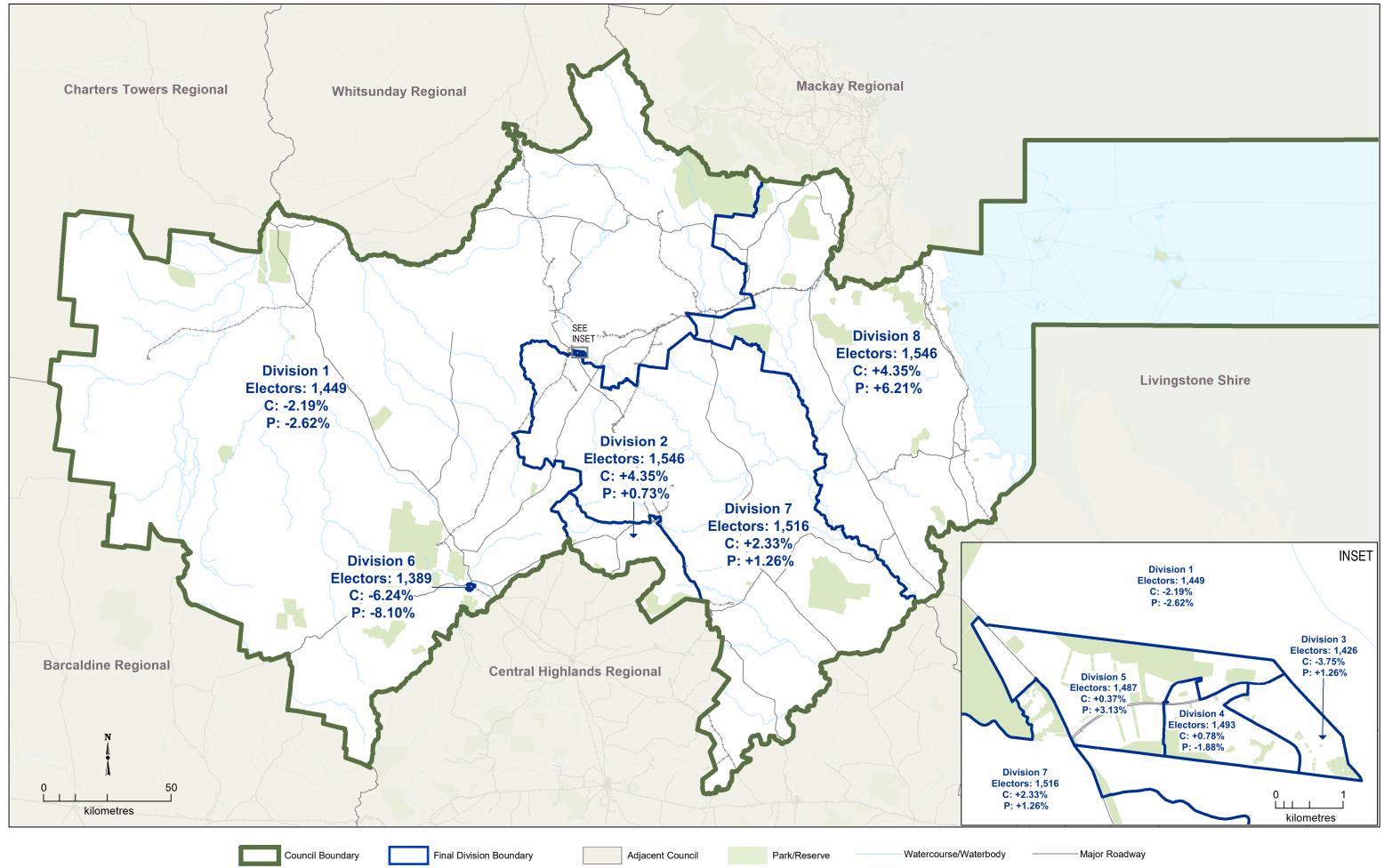
Peter McGraw

Peter McGraw Casual Commissioner

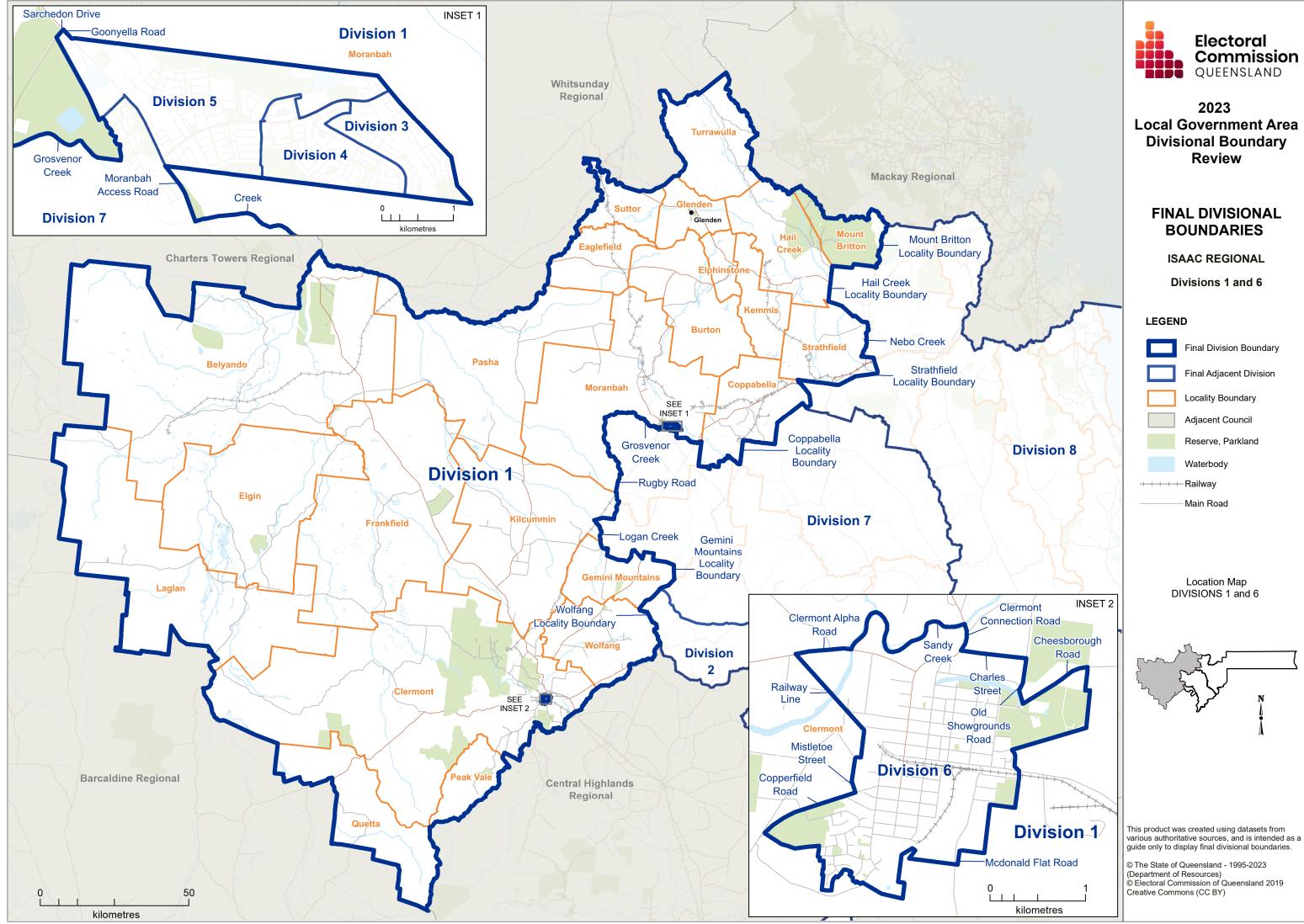
# **APPENDIX 1**

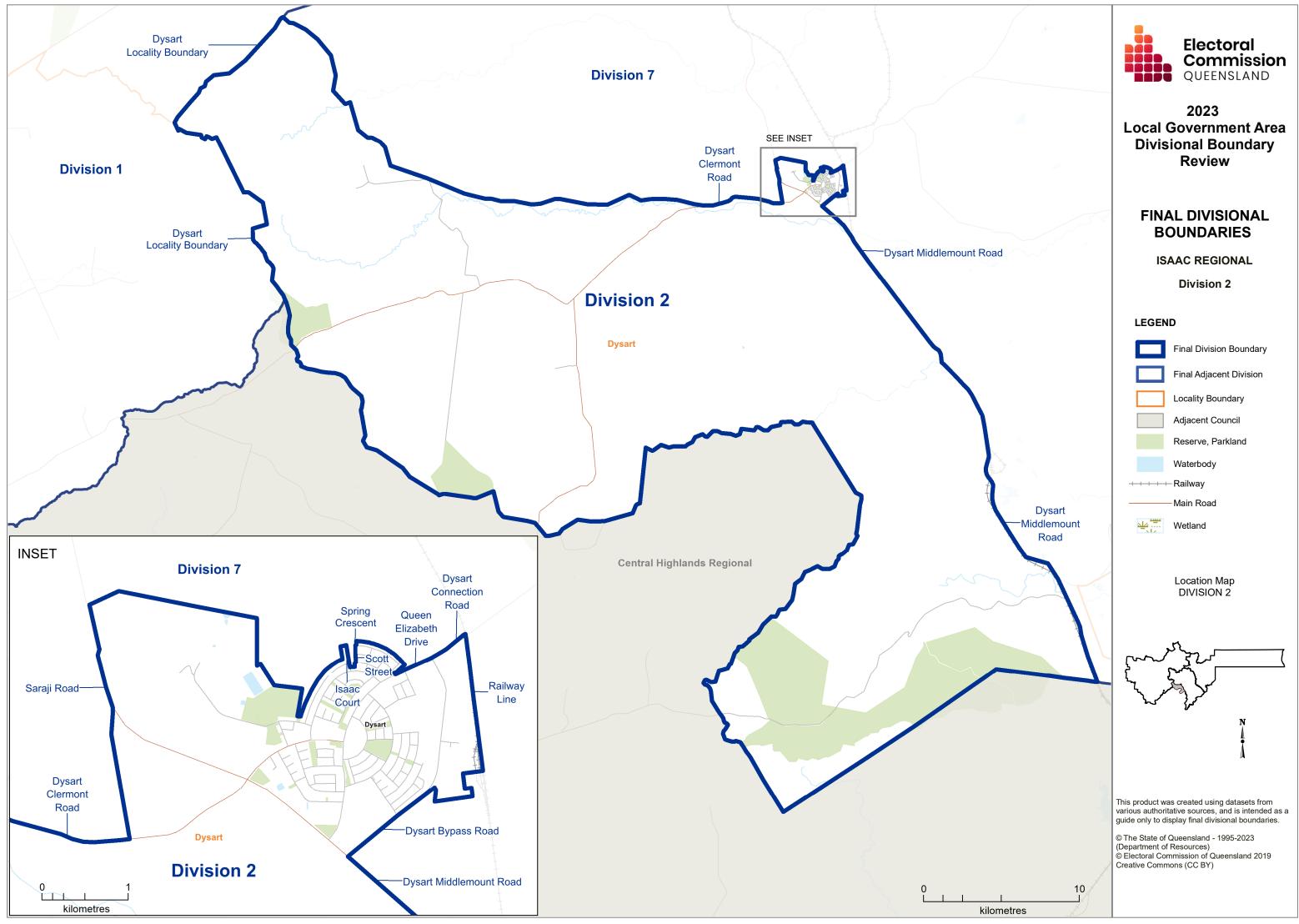
Maps of divisional boundaries for 2024 local government elections

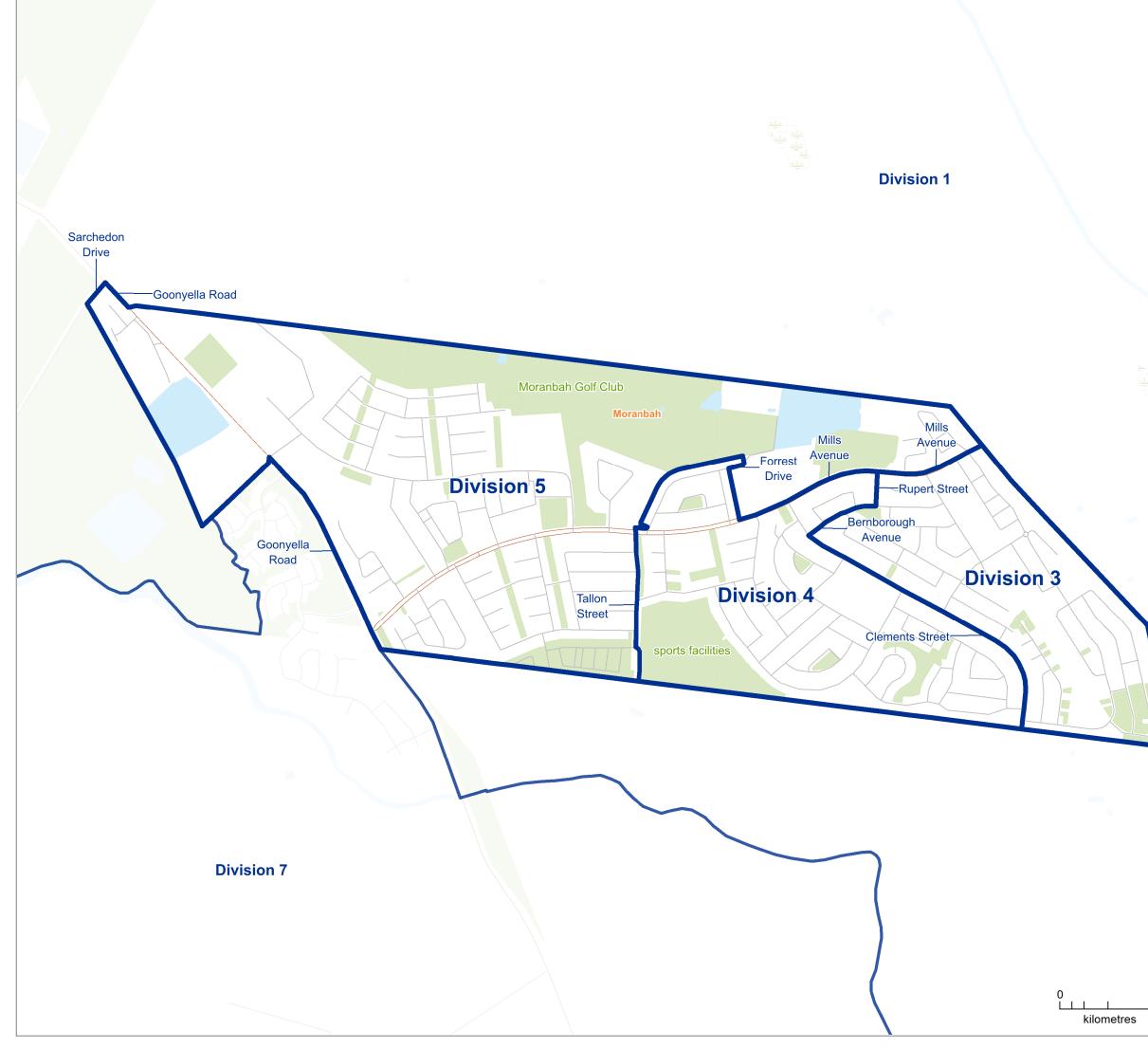
## **ISAAC REGIONAL Final Electoral Divisions**



This product was created using datasets from various authoritative sources and is intended as a guide only to display final divisional boundaries. Deviation of elector enrollment from the average is referenced as C (Current - 2023) and P (Projected - 2028). © The State of Queensland - 1995-2023 (Department of Resources), © Electoral Commission of Queensland 2023, Creative Commons (CC BY)











Electoral Commission QUEENSLAND

2023 Local Government Area **Divisional Boundary** Review

## **FINAL DIVISIONAL BOUNDARIES**

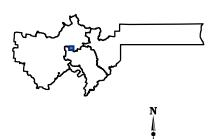
**ISAAC REGIONAL** 

Divisions 3, 4 and 5

### LEGEND



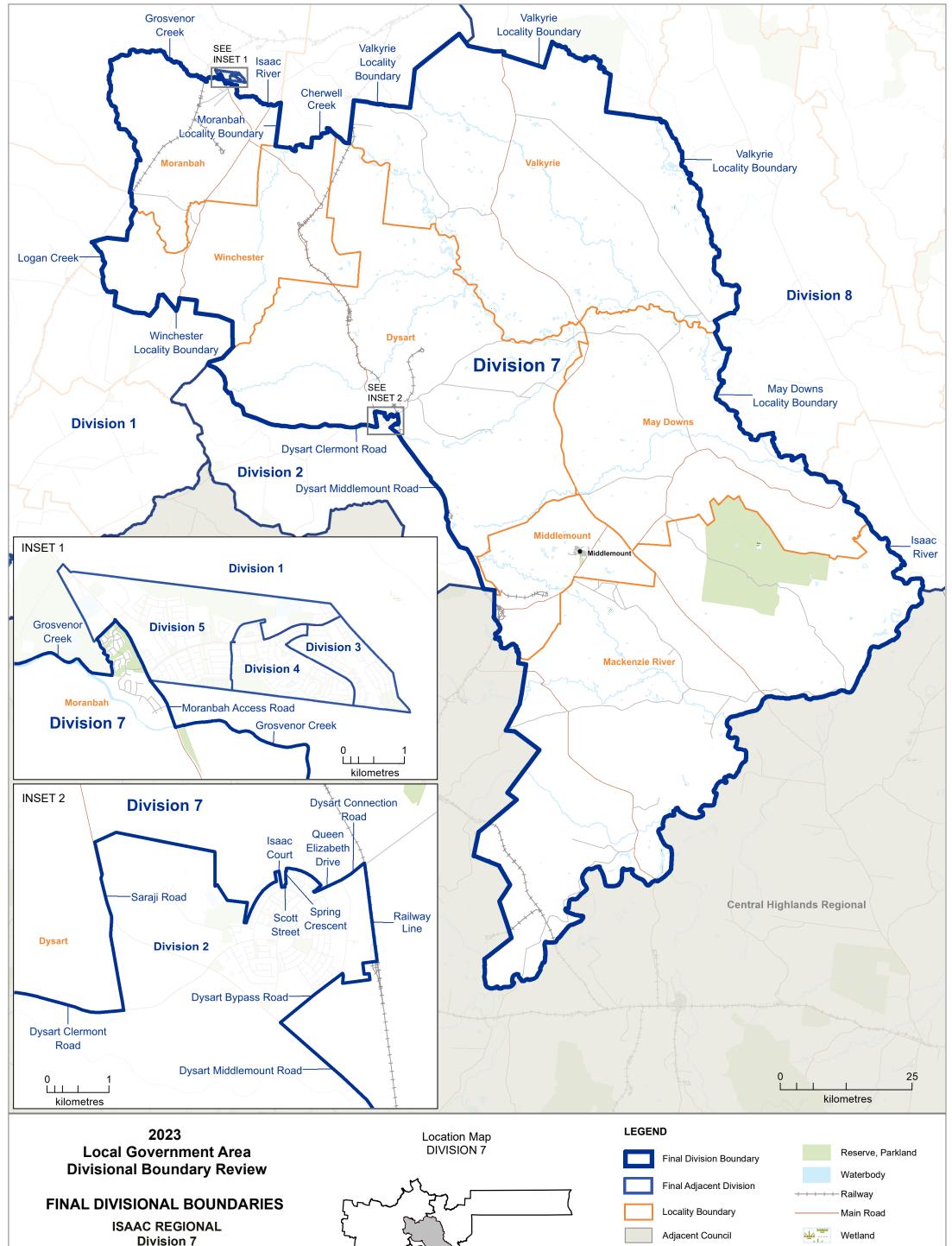
### Location Map DIVISIONS 3, 4 and 5



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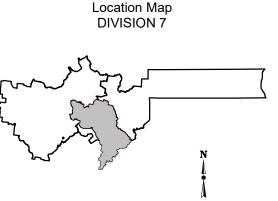
© The State of Queensland - 1995-2023 (Department of Resources) © Electoral Commission of Queensland 2019 Creative Commons (CC BY)

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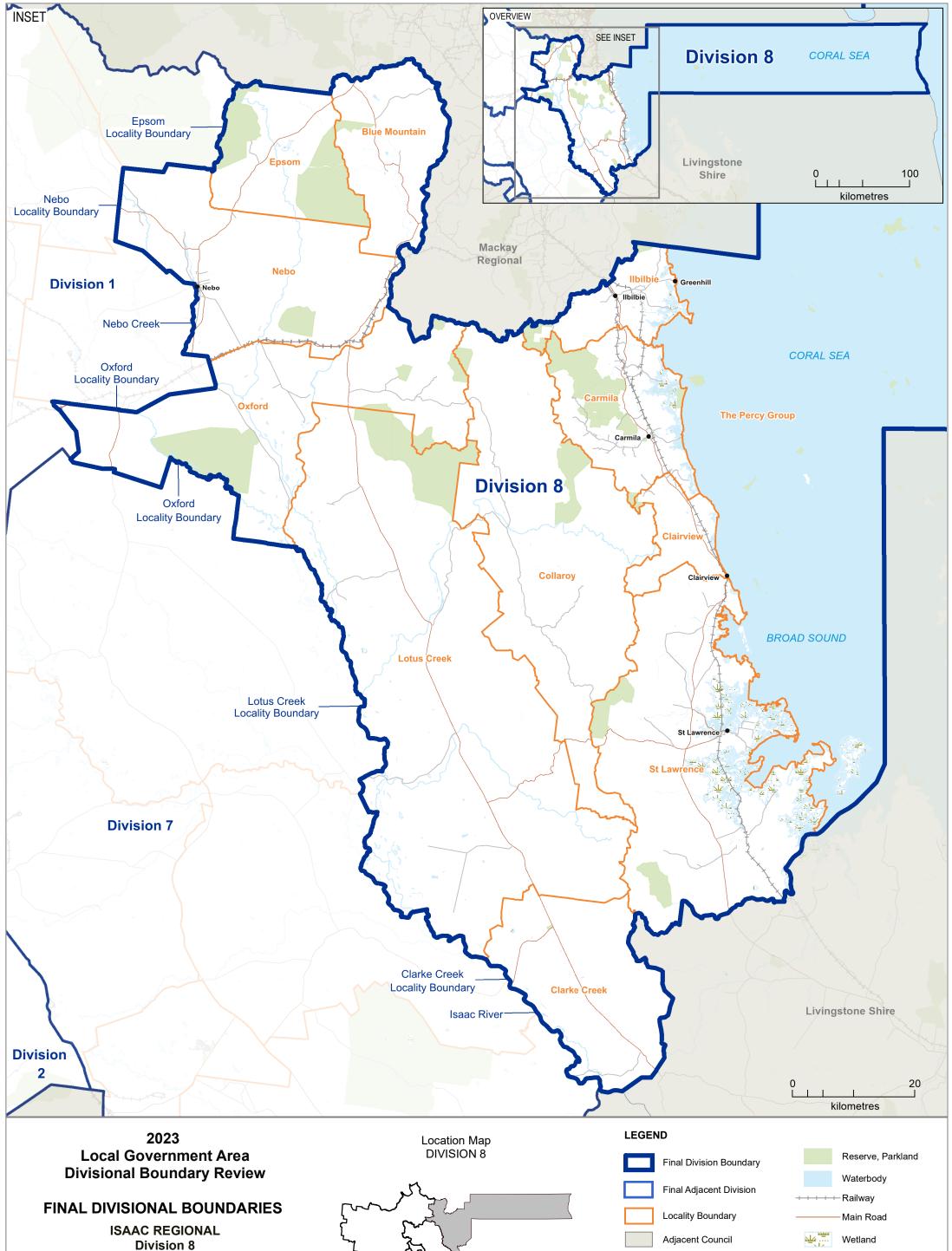
# **Division 7**



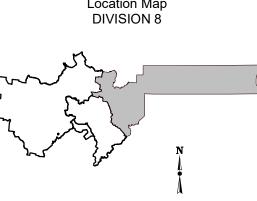


This product was created using datasets from various authoritative sources, and is intended as a guide only to display final divisional boundaries.

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This product was created using datasets from various authoritative sources, and is intended as a guide only to display final divisional boundaries.

# APPENDIX 2

**Ministerial referral** 



Hon Steven Miles MP Deputy Premier Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure

Our ref: MC23/705

19 APR 2023

1 William Street Brisbane Queensland 4000 PO Box 15009 City East Queensland 4002 **Telephone** + 61 3719 7100 **Email** deputy.premier@ministerial.qld.gov.au **Website** www.statedevelopment.qld.gov.au

ABN 65 959 415 158

Mr Pat Vidgen PSM Electoral Commissioner Electoral Commission of Queensland

Dear Mr Vidgen

I write to you in relation to the Isaac Regional Council's (the council), Divisions 1, 2, and 8 out of quota matter.

I have received a letter from Mr Jeff Stewart-Harris, chief executive officer of the council, which is enclosed, that the council has reviewed the enrolment figures provided by the Electoral Commission Queensland as at 3 February 2023. Based on this information the council has provided notice that Divisions 1, 2 and 8 of the council are out of quota, as defined in section 15 of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

I have decided to refer this out of quota matter to the you for the Local Government Change Commission to conduct a review and assessment. I agree with the request by the council that no towns or communities be split as a result of these divisional changes.

I have asked for **Section 1**, Principal Program Officer, in the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning to assist you with any further queries. You may wish to contact **Section 2** or by email at

Yours sincerely

STEVEN MILES MP DEPUTY PREMIER Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure

Enc



SENT BY EMAIL TO: deputy.premier@ministerial.gld.gov.au LGboundaries@ecg.gld.gov.au

1 March 2023

Hon Dr Stephen Miles Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning PO Box 15009 CITY EAST OLD 4002

Mr Pat Vidgen PSM **Electoral Commissioner** GPO Box 1393 **BRISBANE QLD 4001** 

Dear Deputy Premier and Commissioner

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISIONAL ENROLMENT REVIEWS - ISAAC REGIONAL COUNCIL RE

I refer to correspondence received from the Electoral Commission Queensland dated 3 February 2023 in relation to the Local Government Change Commission process for completing divisional enrolment review.

Council notes that following a review of the divisional quotas that Divisions 1, 2 and 8 are currently out of quota as defined in section 15 of the Local Government Act 2009.

Council also notes the impact on Division 1 directly relates to current negotiations around the Glenden Township and the closure of Newlands Mine with the Department of Resources.

It is requested that when considering any boundary amendments that where possible towns or communities are not split. Council will further consider the review at its March 2023 Ordinary Meeting and will provide additional recommendations at this time.

Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or phone

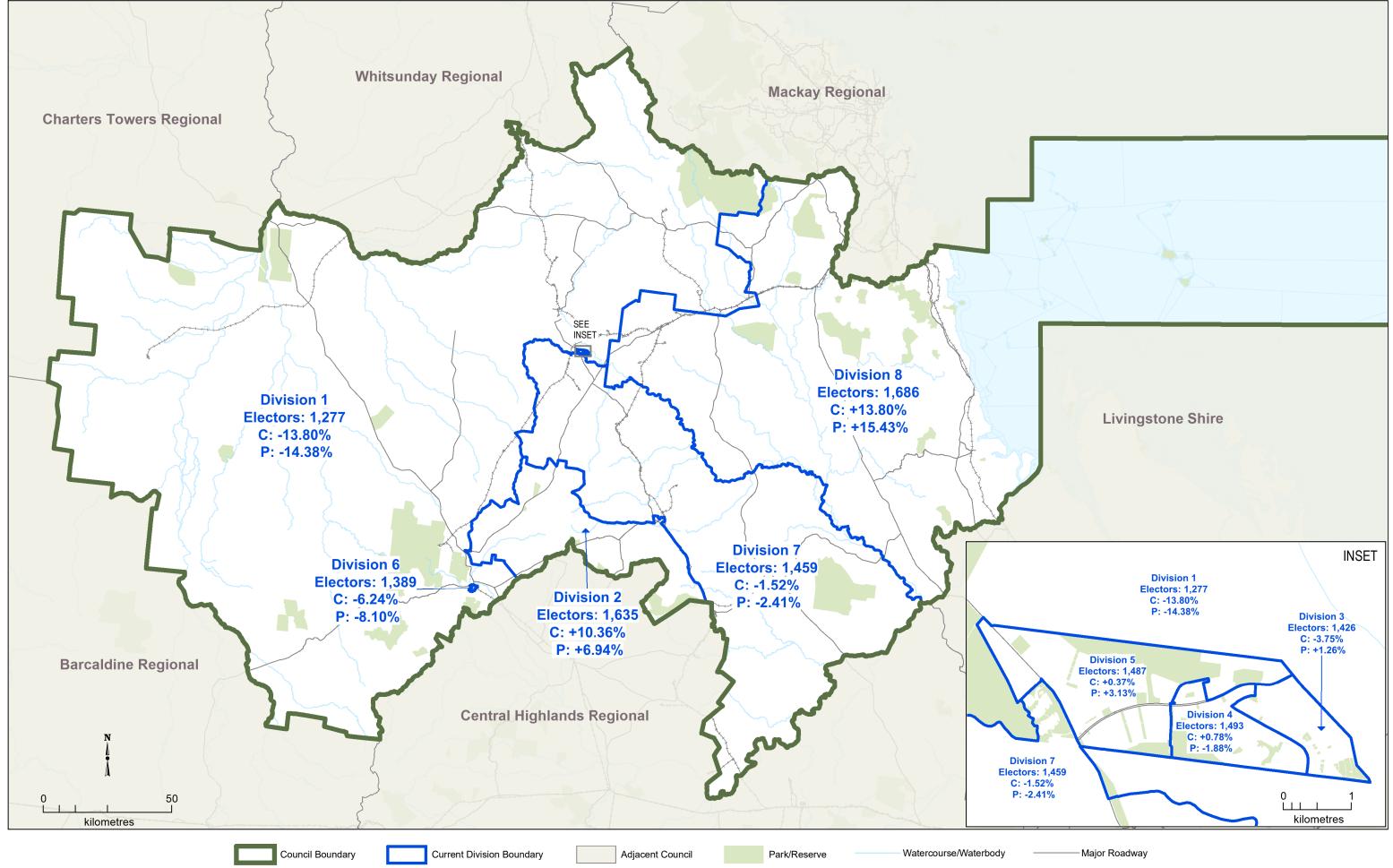
Yours faithfully

MR JEFF STEWART-HARRIS PSM **Chief Executive Officer** 

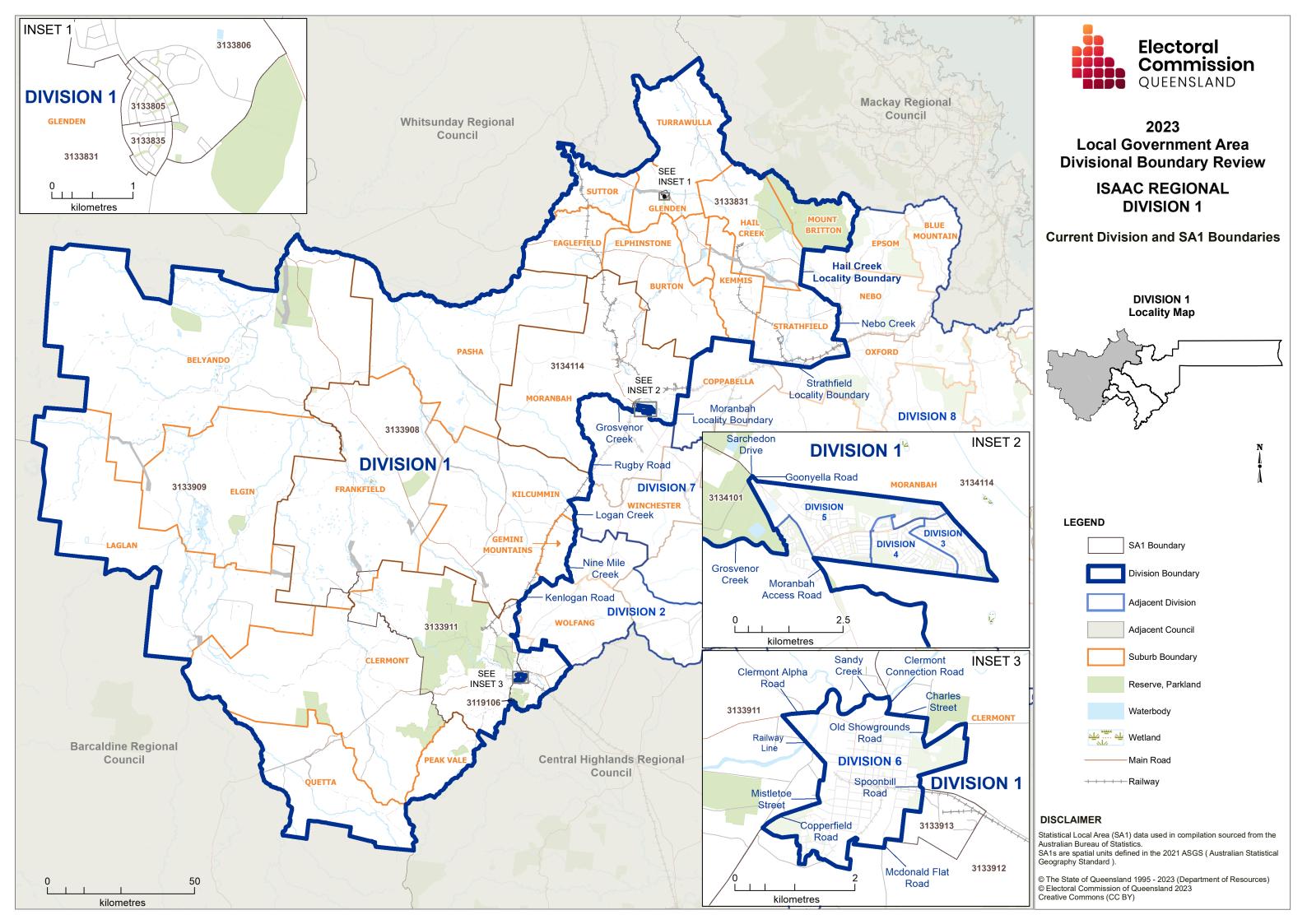
# **APPENDIX 3**

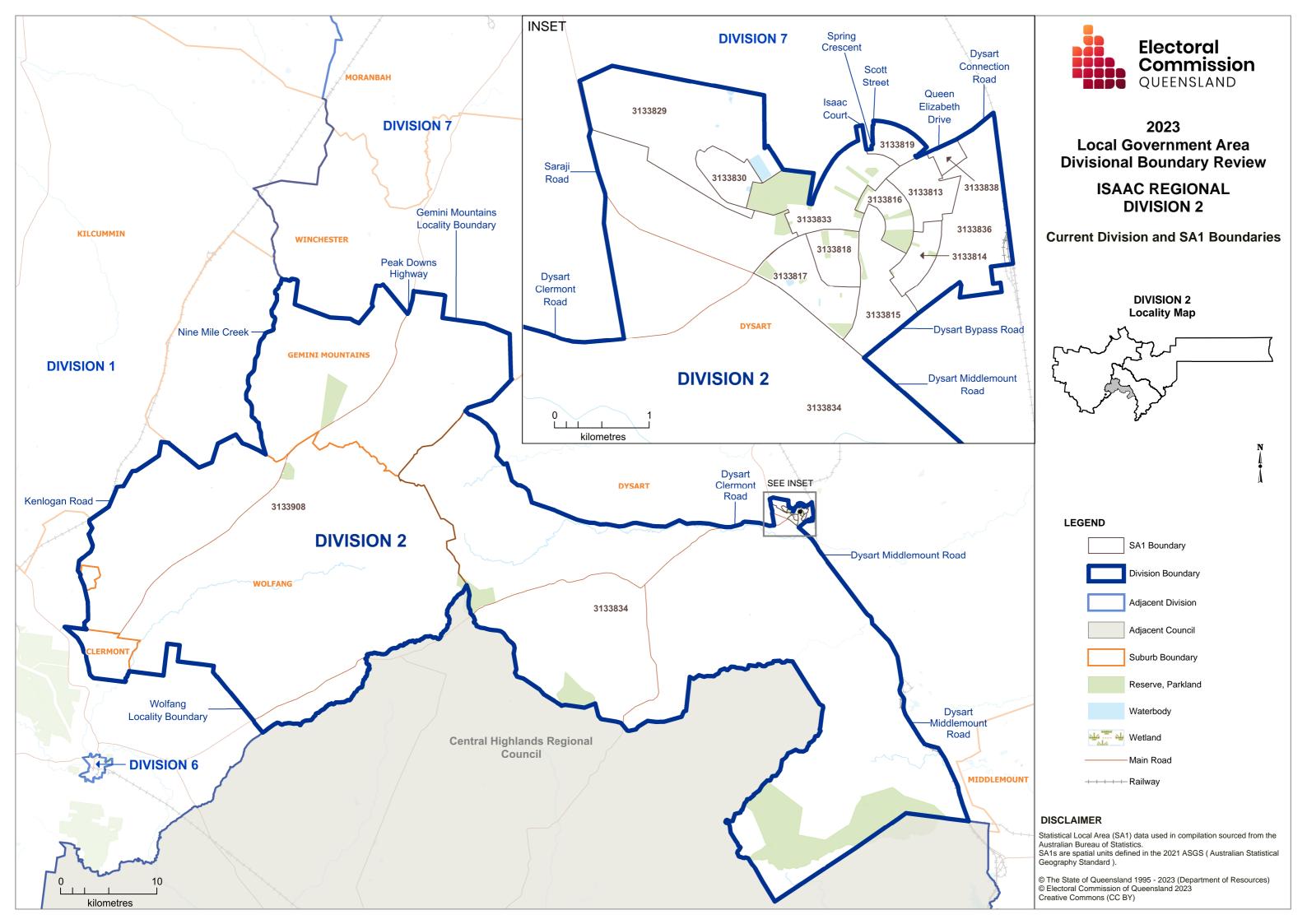
Maps of existing divisional boundaries

## **ISAAC REGIONAL Current Electoral Divisions**

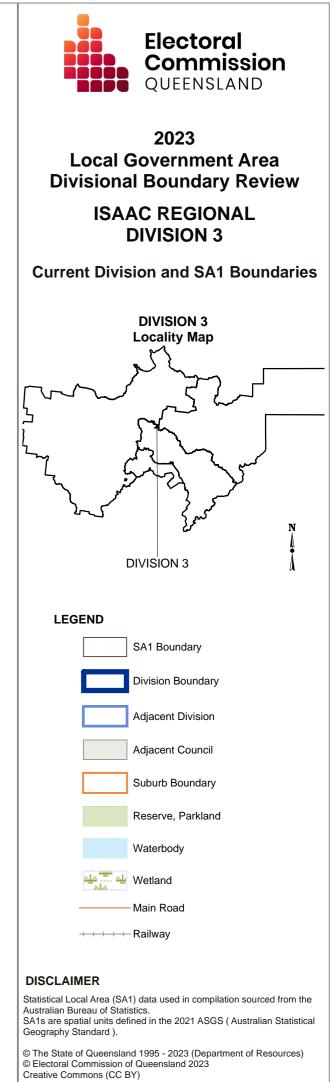


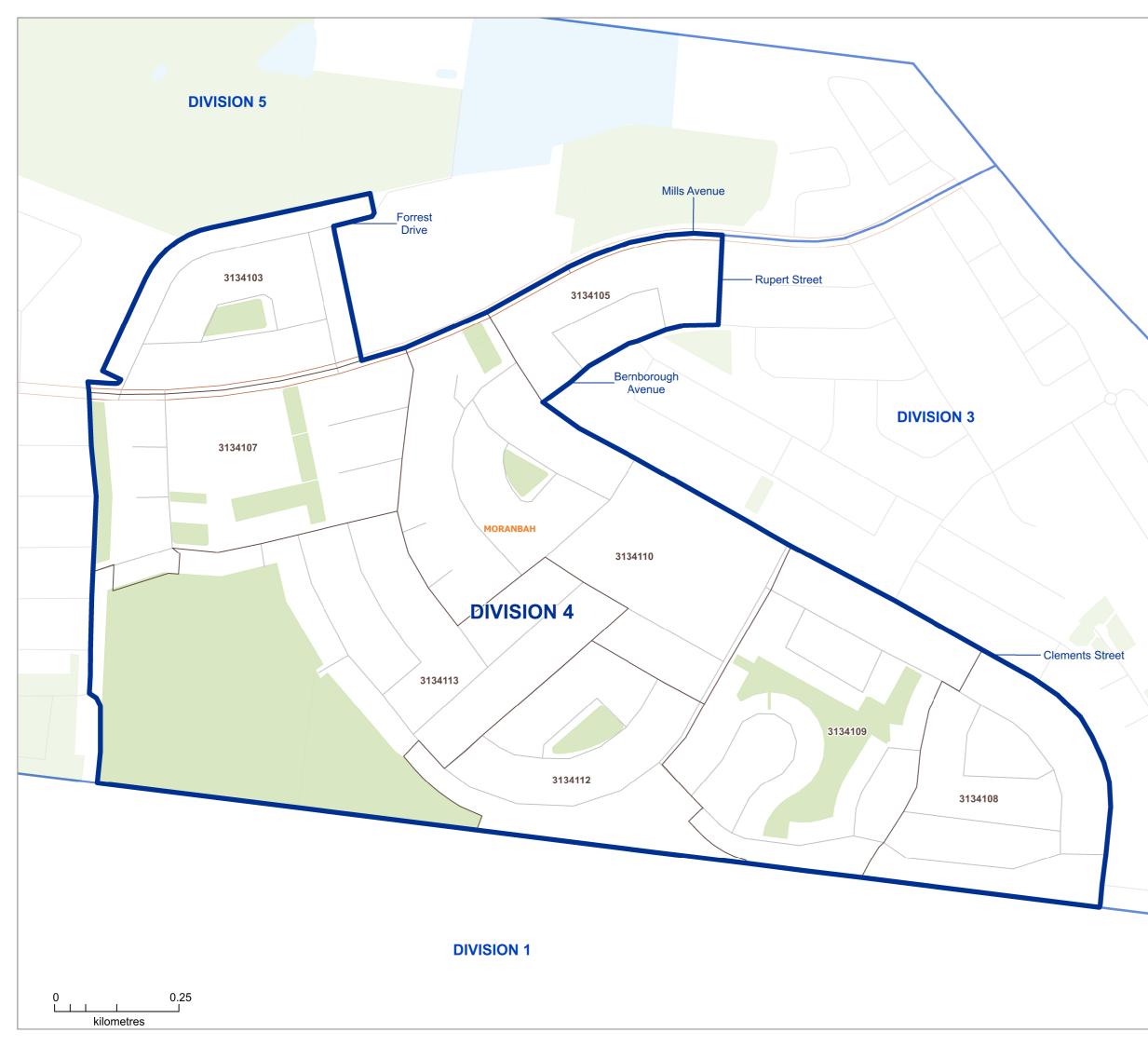
This product was created using datasets from various authoritative sources and is intended as a guide only to display current divisional boundaries. Deviation of elector enrollment from the average is referenced as C (Current - 2023) and P (Projected - 2028). © The State of Queensland - 1995-2023 (Department of Resources), © Electoral Commission of Queensland 2023, Creative Commons (CC BY)

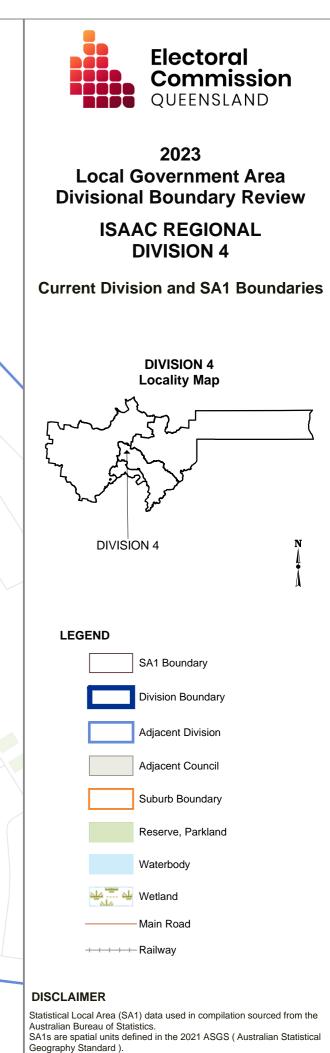


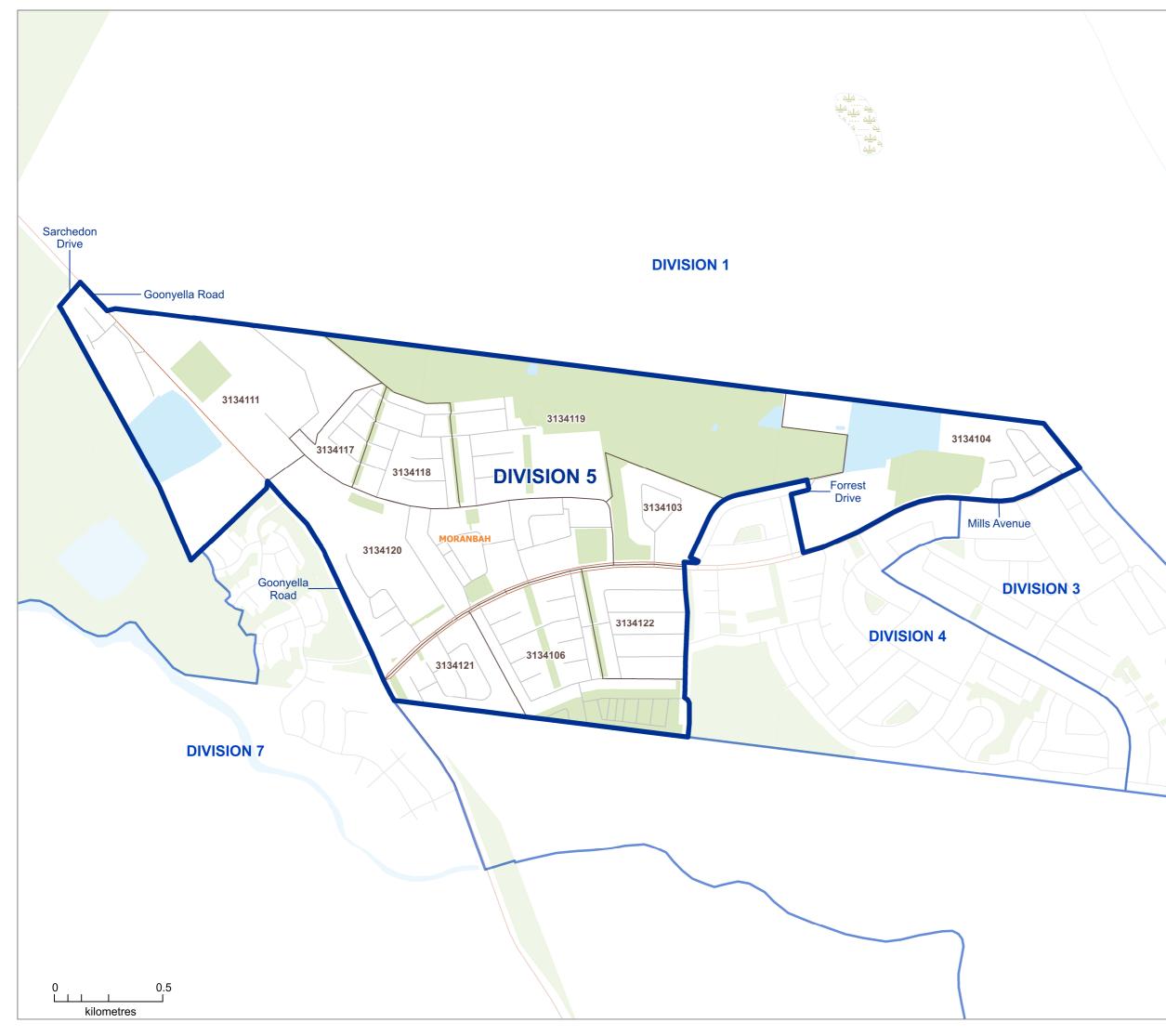












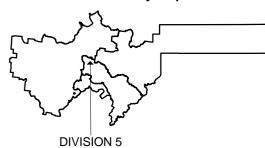


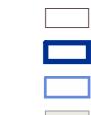
### 2023 Local Government Area Divisional Boundary Review

## ISAAC REGIONAL DIVISION 5

**Current Division and SA1 Boundaries** 

DIVISION 5 Locality Map





LEGEND

Division Boundary

SA1 Boundary

Adjacent Division

Adjacent Council

Suburb Boundary

Reserve, Parkland

Waterbody

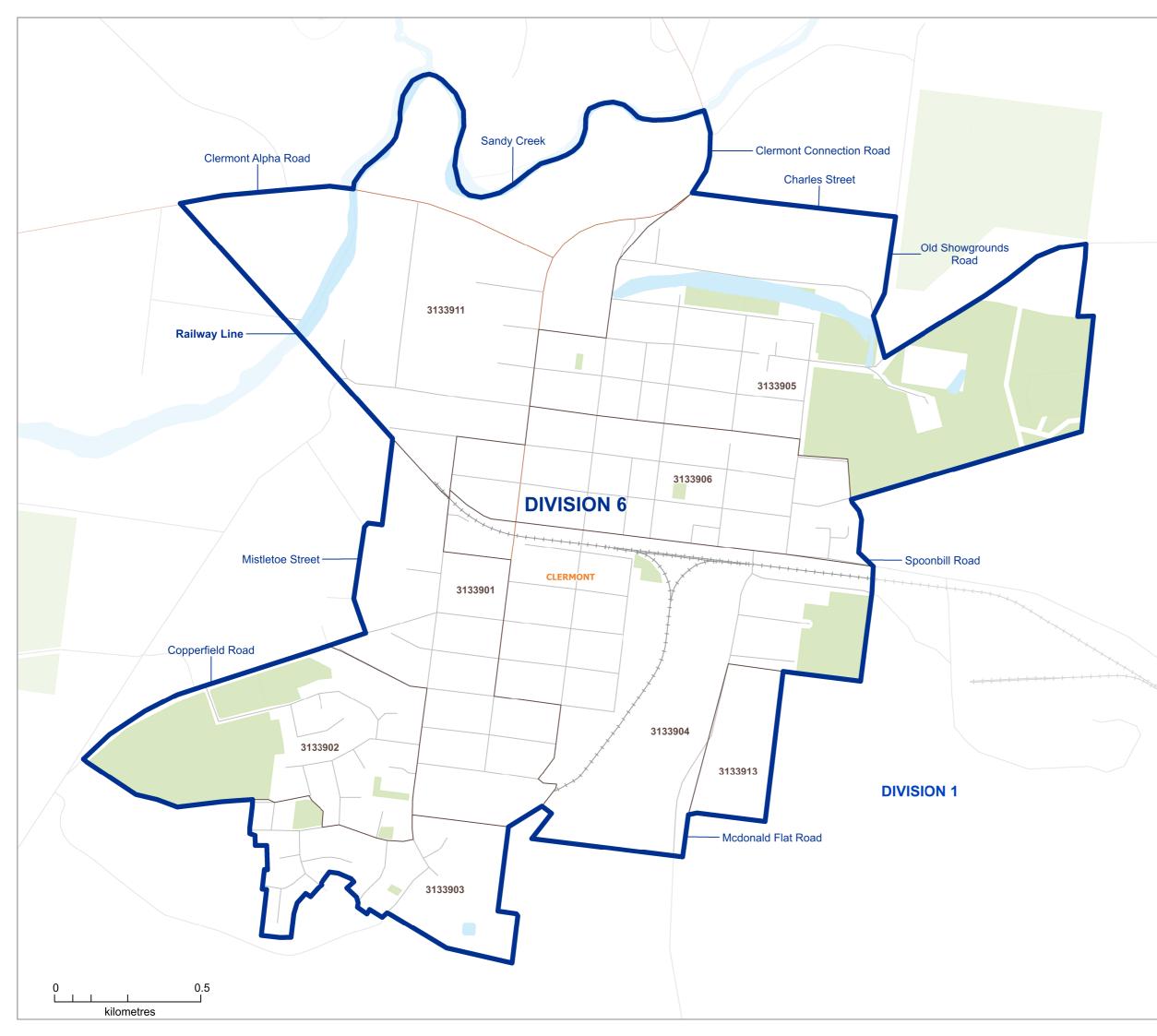
Wetland 🚽 🛄

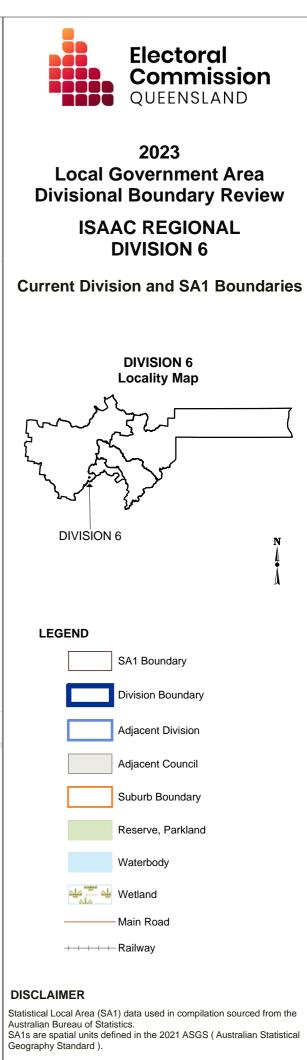
Main Road

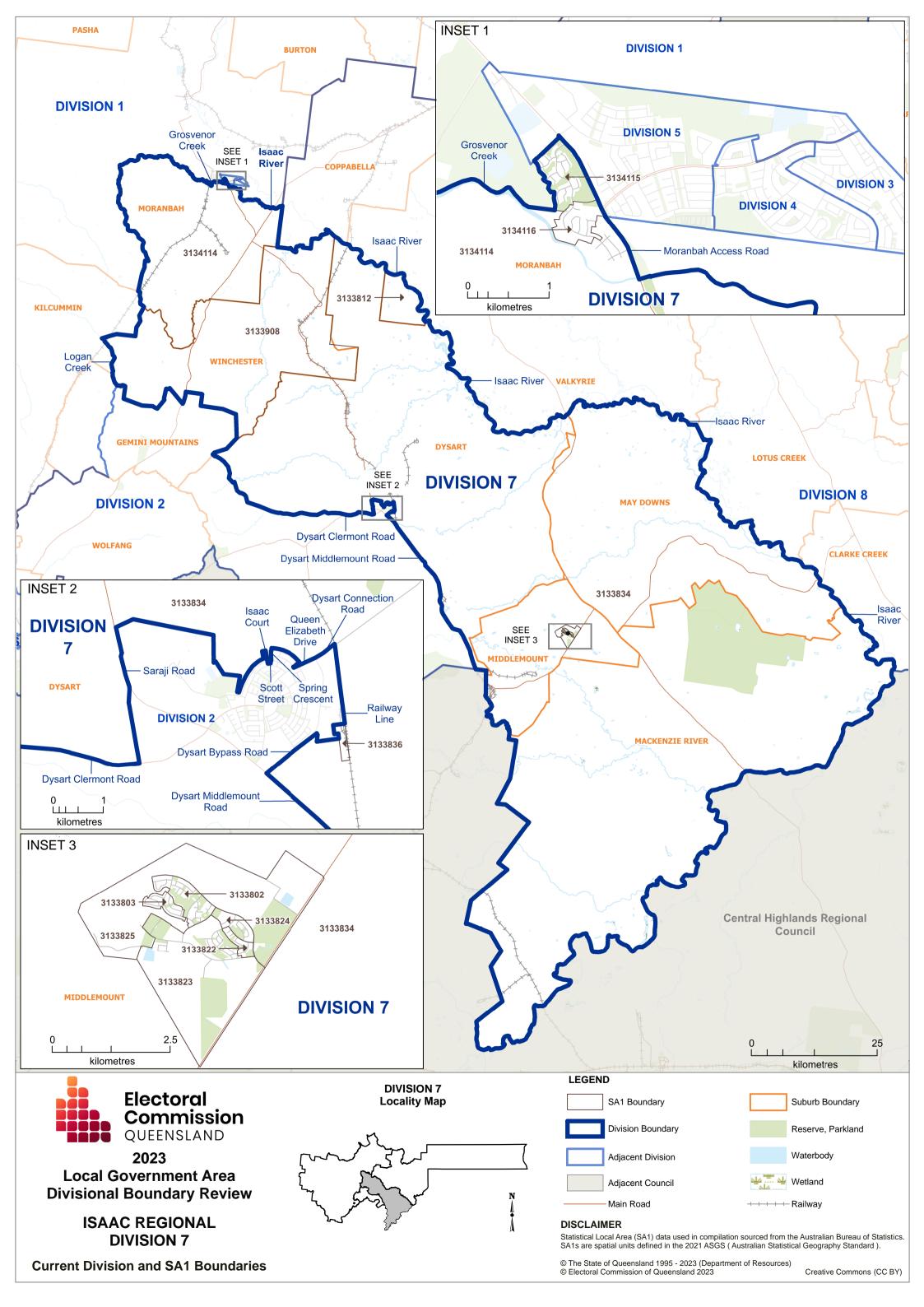
----- Railway

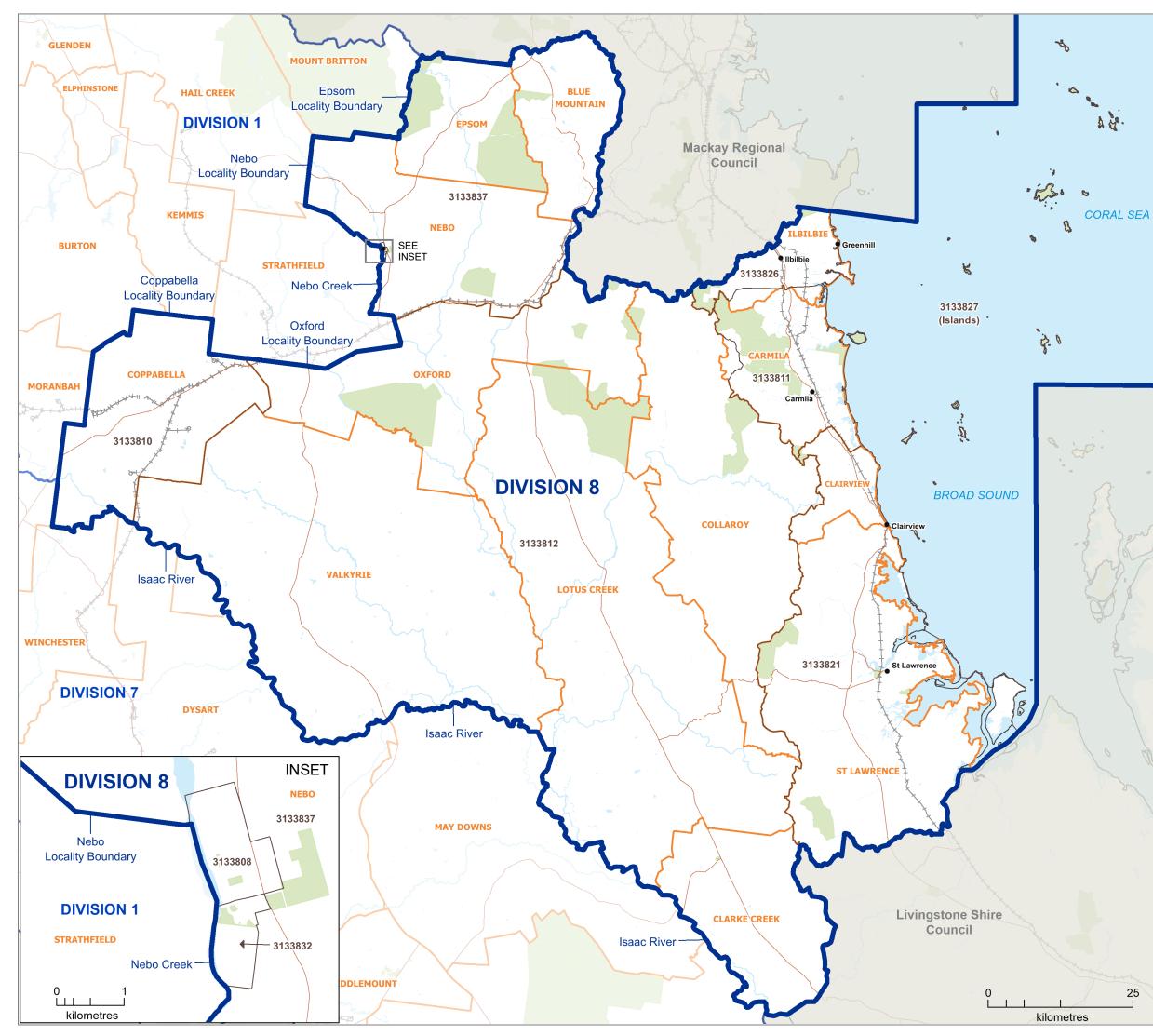
### DISCLAIMER

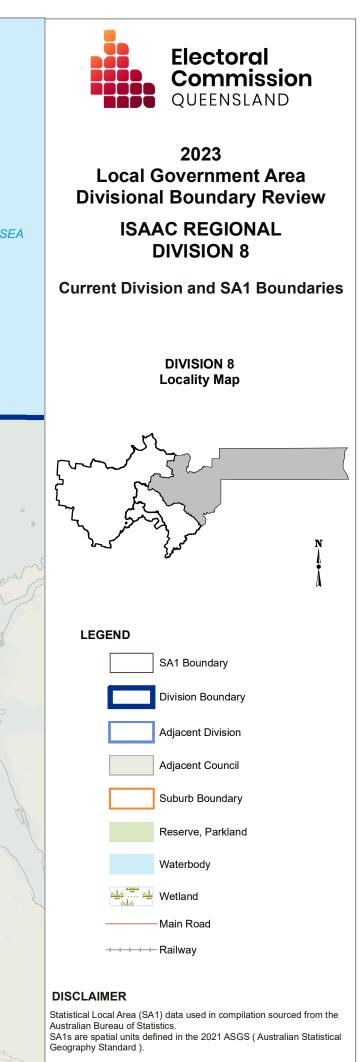
Statistical Local Area (SA1) data used in compilation sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. SA1s are spatial units defined in the 2021 ASGS (Australian Statistical Geography Standard).











# **APPENDIX 4**

Publication guidelines

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION Publication Guidelines – Written Submissions

The following information has been developed to assist those making submissions to the Local Government Change Commission's (Change Commission) 2023 divisional boundary reviews.

## Publishing submissions

The Change Commission is committed to transparency, open access to information and informed public debate.

Under section 19(3)(b) and 19(6) of the *Local Government Act 2009* the Change Commission intends to publish all submissions received as part of a review where it is appropriate to do so, and unless the submitter has requested it remain confidential. Further, the Change Commission reserves the right to redact content, or not publish submissions, at its own discretion.

## What happens after I make a submission?

Once your submission has been received, it will be reviewed to determine whether it is able to be published as part of the review material.

If you do not wish your submission to be published, you should mark your submission as confidential. Submissions which are not marked as confidential will be published on the Electoral Commission of Queensland's website with submitters' names, however, contact details will be redacted.

The Change Commission may decide not to publish all or part of a submission for reasons such as:

- it is not relevant to the divisional boundary review
- it contains content or wording which may be considered offensive or defamatory
- it refers to matters that are sub judice (before the courts), or
- content within the submission is confidential (e.g. commercial in confidence).

If accepted, the information in your submission will be published with your name but with contact details redacted.

## **Confidential submissions**

The Change Commission prefers to publish submissions where possible to promote public discussion and provide transparency in the review process.

If you wish all or part of your submission to be kept confidential and not published, or that your submission be published without your name, you should:

- Include the word 'confidential' clearly in your submission and state the reasons for your request.
- Consider including any confidential information in an appendix to the submission to allow the body of the submission to be published and publicly referred to by the Change Commission.
- If requesting anonymity, make sure that your name and contact details are on a separate page and not in the main part of your submission.

The Change Commission will consider requests for confidentiality but cannot guarantee that submissions will not be published. Ultimately, it is for the Change Commission to determine whether it is in the public interest to publish the submission.

## Can I amend my submission?

If there are further matters you wish to raise after you have lodged your submission, or you wish to amend information provided previously, you can submit an additional submission outlining your requested additions or changes. However, submissions provided after the consultation period are only accepted at Change Commission's discretion.

Any personal information collected by the Change Commission will be managed in accordance with the *Information Privacy Act 2009.* 

# **APPENDIX 5**

Public submissions

# Public submissions

### Name

S1 S2 Josh Parker Name Withheld

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From: Sent: To: Subject: Josh Parker Monday, 31 July 2023 8:56 PM LG CC Submissions Isaac region Boundry changes

Hi there here are my thoughts every time I go to town I have to drive on gravel and sealed roads that at falling apart that have sharp edges pot holes that are constantly wrecking the cars or trucks that drive on them not to mention putting the lives of the people who live and work along these roads at risk So I think this idea is stupid how about use the thousand if not millions of dollars this Boundry changes is going to cost for something useful and that benefits the people who keep this country going

Sent from my iPhone

From: Sent: To: Subject:	noreply@ecq.qld.gov.au Tuesday, 1 August 2023 8:24 PM LG CC Submissions (60796) Isaac Regional Council divisional boundary review -
Online submissi	ion for Isaac Regional Council divisional boundary review from
Submission De	etails
Name:	
Privacy prefere	nces:
Submission tex Be better sent c	t: Leave as is Why change while all is working well All Govt changes cost tax payers to much money on medical health People are dying overloading in hospitals
File upload: N	No file uploaded ()
Submission ID: Time of Submiss Submission IP A	sion: 01 Aug 2023 8:23pm ddress:

**S2** 

Referral URL: https://www.ecq.qld.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/local-government-boundary-reviews/divisional-boundary-reviews/isaac-regional-council-divisional-boundary-review

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHANGE COMMISSION

- W: www.ecq.qld.gov.au
- E: LGBoundaries@ecq.qld.gov.au
- **T**: 1300 881 665
- P: Local Government Change Commission GPO Box 1393 BRISBANE QLD 4001

