

Representation Commission Submission for the Proposed Epsom Electorate

My objection and reasons

1. Ward and Local Board Boundaries

The Commission's report states that the proposed boundaries for Auckland Central would be aligned with the Waitemata and Gulf Ward boundary. In March 2025 Auckland Council confirmed new ward boundaries for the October 2025 elections which would include Parnell and Newmarket in the Waitemata and Gulf Ward. This means that the new Ward and Electorate boundaries would not be aligned. We submit that the change in Ward boundaries removes the rationale for the proposed boundary between the Epsom and Auckland Central Electorates.

The new Waitemata and Gulf Ward boundaries will also not be aligned with the Waitemata Local Board boundaries - which will continue to include Eden Terrace. For reasons which we note below, we believe it is important to maintain stable representation for these communities and they should therefore not be moved to the Epsom Electorate.

2. City Rail Link, City Centre Master Plan, and Uptown

When it opens in 2026, the Auckland City Rail Link will include a loop of centrally located stations connecting the City Centre. These stations are either located in, or directly on the current Auckland Central Boundaries. The precincts served by these stations also align closely with the City Centre Master Plan which aims to ensure a connected, accessible and inclusive City Centre. In our view this is a key community of interest, and given the long term nature of the infrastructure and the plans. It is a community that should be maintained within a consistent electorate and should therefore not be moved to the Epsom Electorate.

The proposed boundaries would substantially reduce the overlap between the Auckland Central Electorate and the City Centre Master Plan because it would remove the Eden Terrace/Uptown and Grafton/Health precincts from that electorate if they were to be moved to the Epsom Electorate.

3. Student Accommodation

Auckland Central currently contains two University Campuses, as well as the student accommodation associated with those campuses. The proposed changes would move four student residences out of the electorate:

- Stuart McCutcheon House
- Carlaw Park Student Village
- Grafton Student Flats
- Grafton Hall

Students, and particularly those living in student accommodation, form a key community of interest. Students in these living arrangements are commonly not covered by protections in the Residential Tenancies Act. In the past, there has been a parliamentary inquiry into student accommodation which demonstrates the shared interests of this community, which was supported because of these connections through the Education and Workforce Select Committee by those who would become the outgoing and incoming Auckland Central MPs, respectively.

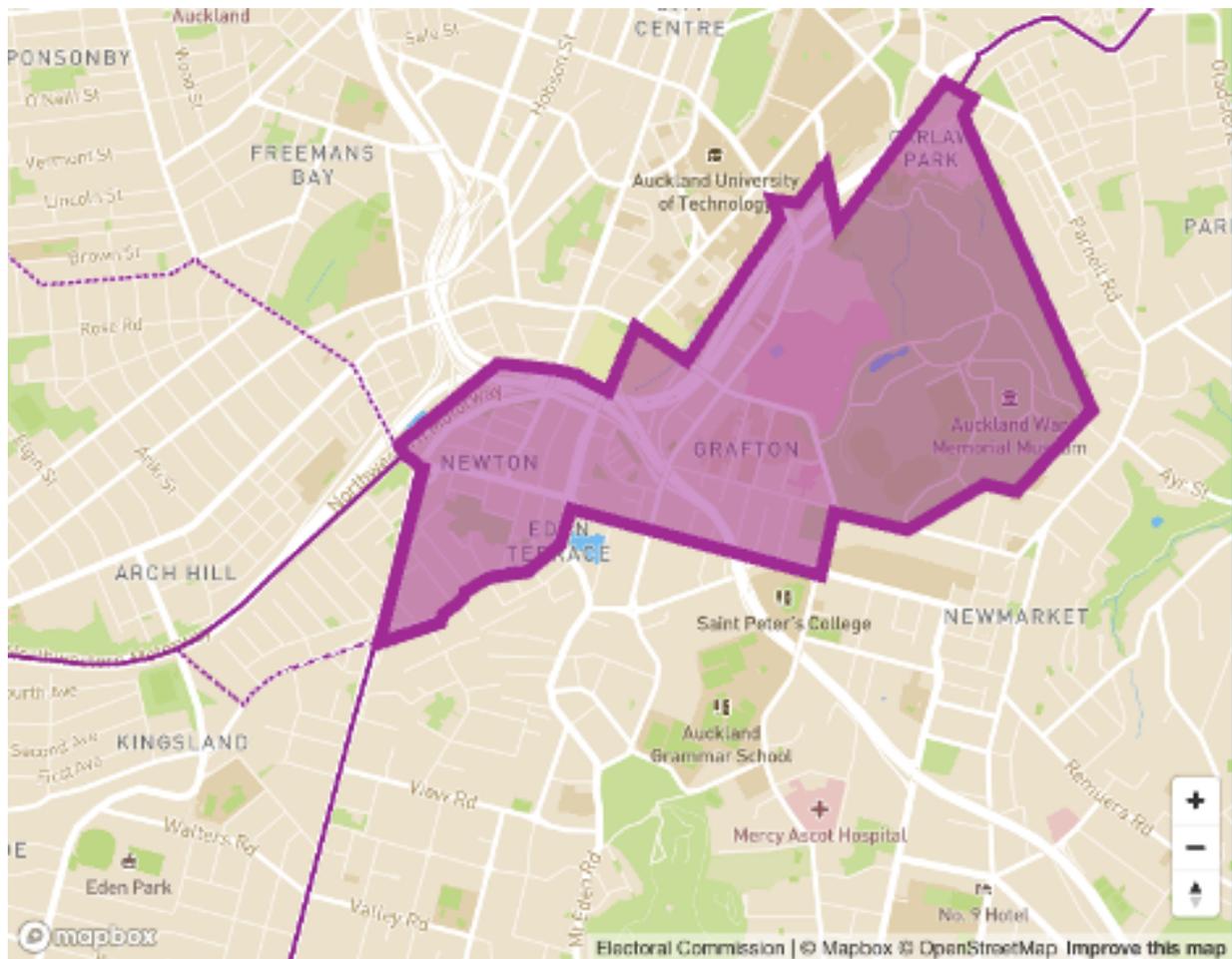
Splitting these students out from the other student accommodations and universities which will remain in Auckland Central would reduce their representation and efficacy of it.

My suggested solution

In relation to Eden Terrace and the City Centre Master Plan, we submit that the Commission should align the Auckland Central/Epsom boundary in Eden Terrace and Newton with the southern boundary of the Waitematā Local board.

In relation to Student accommodation, we submit that the Commission should maintain the existing boundary between Auckland Central and Epsom for the electorate to ensure all current student residences continue to be located in the same electorate.

Areas which we propose should not move to Epsom:



References

1. Determination of representation arrangements

“87. Based on the material presented at the hearing and our site visits, we uphold the central ward boundaries as proposed in the Council’s initial proposal. This means that Parnell and Newmarket will return to the Waitematā and Gulf Ward, and St Johns to the Ōrākei Ward. Our decision aligns ward and local board boundaries for all areas in the central wards, aside from Eden Terrace.” - Page 26

<https://www.lgc.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/Auckland-Council-Determination-2025.pdf>

2. City Centre Master Plan Geography

<https://www.aucklandccmp.co.nz/about-the-city-centre-masterplan-ccmp/geography-of-the-ccmp/>

