

Hon Joe Szakacs MP



**Government
of South Australia**

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Mr Rob Donaldson
Chair
South Australian Local Government Boundaries Commission
GPO Box 2329
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By email: boundaries.commission@sa.gov.au

Dear Mr Donaldson

Thank you for providing the South Australian Local Government Boundaries Commission's (the Commission) Inquiry Report into the Town of Gawler Boundary Change Proposal (the Proposal).

I have carefully considered the Proposal, the Investigator's Report, the Commission's Inquiry Report and the Commission's recommendations contained in the Inquiry Report. While I appreciate the Commission has diligently undertaken the inquiry and made its recommendations to me in accordance with its responsibilities under the Act, as Minister, I must consider broader matters and implications.

I am of the view that a council boundary change affecting the Concordia Growth Area could negatively impact land releases, infrastructure planning, and ultimately, the delivery of critically needed housing development in this area, which is fundamental to delivering the South Australian Government's Housing Roadmap. In this context, I cannot agree with the Commission's recommendation that the Concordia Growth Area move from The Barossa Council to the Town of Gawler.

I also note that many residents expressed deep identification with their current council areas. For example, Hewett residents made strong statements that they feel part of the Light Regional Council community. Switching to Gawler might break that association or create a sense of loss.

Boundary changes generally tend to be contentious because they involve shifting responsibility for services, rates, and identity. Often people oppose them unless there is a significant, obvious benefit.



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For these reasons, I am unable to agree with the Commission's recommendations that Area 1 (Concordia Growth Area), Area 2 (Hewett) and Area 3A North (Kalbeeba) move into the Town of Gawler's area.

I am therefore requesting, under section 31 (8) of the *Local Government Act 1999* (the Act), that the Commission makes the following specified amendments to the Inquiry Report and its recommendations to reflect the following—

- **That Area 1 - the Concordia Growth Area** – be retained in The Barossa Council.
- **That Area 2 – the area of Hewett** - be retained in Light Regional Council.
- **That Area 3A (North) – the area of Kalbeeba** that is north of Calton Road – be retained in The Barossa Council.

Under the Act, it is my responsibility to determine whether a general proposal proceed or not proceed. I invite the Commission to make these variations and consider resubmitting to me an amended report, noting that I also have available to me the option of refusing a report in its entirety if I disagree with specific recommendations.

I intend to make a public statement on Thursday 18 September 2025, that I will be referring the Inquiry Report back to the Commission to request that the Commission amends its recommendations so that Areas 1 and 3 are retained in The Barossa Council and Area 2 is retained in the Light Regional Council.

Further, I will also state that I will not be approving Areas 1, 2 and 3 in accordance with the Commission's current recommendations.

I also take this opportunity to thank the Commission for its conscientious and thorough inquiry into this Proposal.

Yours sincerely



Hon Joe Szakacs MP
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

18 / 09 / 2025