

STAGE 2 PROPOSAL FOR COUNCIL BOUNDARY CHANGE – TRURO AND DISTRICT

INTRODUCTION

Members of the Public in Truro have submitted a proposal to the Boundary Commission to consider boundary alterations. We propose that Truro and the surrounding district be removed from Mid Murray Council and be included in Barossa Council.

We have contacted the Boundary Commission and followed the process contained in Guideline 6.

- We have collected signatures in favour of our proposal from more than 10% of eligible electors, and this has been verified by the CEO of Mid Murray Council.
- We have provided a map of the area, which is in possession of the Boundary Commission.
- We have set out the grounds on which the proposal is made. See our initial submission to the Boundary Commission and our discussion of the Section 26 Principles below.
- We have written to the mayors of both councils—Mid Murray and Barossa--about the Commission's requirements, explicitly referencing the Section 26 Principles.
- We have met and spoken to our proposal with both councils.

We have sent under separate cover to the Commission a copy of *Truro the Travellers Rest*, a book by local historian Reg Munchenberg OAM, which is a thorough history of the settlement and progress of the local area. Politically, Truro District Council formed in 1876. There were numerous petitions for areas to join or leave the council for the next hundred and ten years. (Munchenberg, pps. 111-117) In 1991 Truro District Council joined Ridley Council to become Ridley-Truro Council. Ridley-Truro Council joined Mid Murray Council in 1997.

The land use around Truro is agricultural: broad acre wheat and grain farming, sheep and cattle, with gravel mines and vineyards here and there.

The employment base resides in the Barossa Valley—wineries, mixed farming, mining, retail, construction, utilities, medical, education, media, social and government services.

PRINCIPLES AS OUTLINED IN SECTION 26 OF COUNCIL BOUNDARY CHANGE PROPOSALS GUIDELINE 3.

- **The resources available to local communities should be used as economically as possible while recognising the desirability of avoiding significant divisions within a community;**

The Truro respondents consider that Truro and District (Truro, Barton, Dutton and the surrounding area) residents will have better resources within Barossa Council than remaining in Mid Murray Council. Three members of the respondents committee are board members of Truro and District Community Association, and three are not.

Both MMC and the residents are disadvantaged due to the distance from Mannum, particularly the environmental footprint of transportation.

MMC meetings which were held at Cambrai--which is central to the council area--have been moved to Mannum. This was done due to MMC staff and councillors having to travel from Mannum to Cambrai. Conversely, this impacts on ratepayer having access to physically attend MMC meetings.

The shortest route to MMC office is 87km from the Truro Post Office. It takes an hour to travel along the Sturt Highway along a designated heavy vehicle northern connector road which has increased risk to accessing our council office for both our community and MMC office staff for driving between our towns.

STEDS scheme rates go to MMC but the contract for the waste goes to Barossa.

- **Proposed changes should, wherever practicable, benefit ratepayers;**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council will benefit the local ratepayers more than Mid Murray Council. Barossa Council is larger and better funded, while Mid Murray is considering ways to cut expenses across the board. Mid Murray's rate percentage for residential properties in Truro is .003775. Barossa Council's rate percentage for residential properties in Angaston is .002762. Barossa charges less per dollar valuation.

We are researching commercial property rates. One member who has a shop front on Moorundie Street reports that: "PlanSA land use is Shop & Dwelling, but MMC don't seem to have a mixed use code and charge us residential rate of .003775. We unfortunately don't have a commercial/business rate to help comparisons on the use. Our rates work out to \$859 a quarter, which includes a regional landscape levy rate of 0.001458. We pay total \$608 a quarter for comparison in Tea Tree Gully on a higher valuation including green waste bin, verges mowed, tree planting, mulched garden beds, parks with amenities etc.!"

We recognise that if a number of rate payers leave Mid Murray Council it could cause them to raise rates to make up a shortfall. Please see the Appendix for a couple of statements Mid Murray Council Simone Baily made publicly about Council funding needs and Truro's place in Council's plans.

- **A council should have a sufficient resource base to fulfil its functions fairly, effectively and efficiently;**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council has a better resource base than Mid Murray Council.

- Mid Murray does not have the resources to fund local footpaths or seal residential roads.
- Mid Murray is proposing the possibility of selling building assets, including the Town Hall, Oval, and former Council building. A letter to the Truro and District Community Association pertaining to this is attached. See the Appendix.
- In Mannum we see public amenities that Truro cannot access because of the distance—playgrounds are the prime example
- Truro does not have a public playground ever since the Department of Education made the school playground off limits. Three swing sets and one seesaw do not suffice.
- Dutton does not have mains water, public toilet, firefighting water supply or hydrant. There are no public facilities of any kind—as far as we are aware, Mid Murray Council has

never lobbied for any. The Community Association asked for consideration of extending mains water 6km to Dutton as part of the proposed highway bypass construction, since the service to Truro will need to be enlarged to supply sufficient water for road base compacting. At a meeting with Mayors Lange and Bailey at which MMC was asked to schedule repairs on a dilapidated bridge being used as a bypass during road construction in Dutton, Mayor Bailey stated that MMC was not keeping up with infrastructure maintenance and Mayor Lange stated that Barossa Council is able to run a maintenance schedule to their satisfaction. While nobody can predict whether Barossa Council will ignore improvements to Dutton's public infrastructure, we consider it worth while to mention the local needs.

- **A council should offer its community a reasonable range of services delivered on an efficient, flexible, equitable and responsive basis;**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council will provide the same or better services than Mid Murray Council:

- Access to medical facilities and services, which are all in the Barossa.
- Transport to medical appointments—Barossa used to supply a council car for local Truro and District residents, but Mid Murray withdrew from the arrangement.
- Tourism support has been mostly minimal to date from Mid Murray Council—the strong Truro and District Community Association has taken on the challenge to attract tourists and develop and maintain tourist facilities. We shall attend an upcoming MMC event on Tourism, even though the agenda specifically refers to the Murray River.
- TDCA has funded a concept plan for land on the main street. This land was effectively given to Mid Murray Council by local landowners for community development and has been left vacant for years. The Truro Recreation and Playspace plan was developed through community consultation and the Truro Masterplan which was presented by URPS Consultants and approved by MMC. TDCA has not asked for any funding, only assurance that this vacant land will not be sold by council. There has been no support but rather pushback from Mid Murray regarding land and play equipment maintenance costs. We consider this reaction as premature given that the Association is in exploratory stages of development of this important and underused plot of land in the centre of town on the main street.

- **A council should facilitate effective planning and development within an area, and be constituted with respect to an area that can be promoted on a coherent basis;**

At TDCA meetings, the CEO of Mid Murray Council has clearly stated to the Truro community that the local community is responsible for generating ideas for planning and development in their area. This is unrealistic for community volunteers without the professional and qualified support of senior council officers.

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council will facilitate better planning and development than Mid Murray Council.

Barossa Council has The Big Project where there is a plan for a major development within each town. To quote from the Barossa Council website:

“The Big Project is the Barossa region’s largest and most ambitious community infrastructure project. It provides a blueprint for our investment in recreation, culture, and social infrastructure over a 35-year horizon.

Our vision is to deliver jobs and growth in our community and provide health and wellbeing outcomes that will genuinely transform the Barossa. The Big Project is embedded in our Long Term Financial Plan and is premised on attracting third-party funds to deliver infrastructure upgrades.”

Barossa is looking at developing community assets, MMC are looking at selling off assets. We feel this shows a lack of commitment in the long-term.

- **A council should be in a position to facilitate sustainable development, the protection of the environment and the integration of land use scheme**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council will better facilitate sustainable development, protection of the environment and integration of land use scheme than Mid Murray Council. Barossa’s Big Project is an example of forward-thinking planning and execution. We would value consultation with Mid Murray Council on sustainable development or environmental protection in Truro. TDCA solely funded and carried out the cleanup of the town creek in Heroes Park, a memorial park in the centre of town.

- **A council should reflect communities of interest of an economic, recreational, social, regional or other kind, and be consistent with community structures, values, expectations and aspirations**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council already provides the economic, recreational and social communities of interest for the Truro locals

Residents from Truro and Dutton do not use recreational facilities in MMC towns but are involved in the Barossa community for services and cultural events. Sports, fitness, health, shopping, public library, festivals, seasonal community celebrations, and school holiday activities are all accessed in the Barossa rather than Mannum, Blanchetown, Sedan or Cambrai.

Service clubs that local residents utilise are all located in the Barossa. Most services and service connections are in Barossa. An example is the CFS – Truro CFS Brigade is in the Northern Barossa Group with Nuriootpa, Angaston and Tanunda. Another example is Christian worship. The Truro Lutheran Church and the Dutton Lutheran Church are members of the Barossa North Lutheran Parish. The majority of students attend secondary schooling in the Barossa area.

- **A council area should incorporate or promote an accessible centre (or centres) for local administration and services**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council’s administration and services are much closer than Mid Murray’s. Nuriootpa is a fifteen minute drive rather than an hour or more to Mannum.

- **The importance within the scheme of local government to ensure that local communities within large council areas can participate effectively in decisions about local matters**

The Truro respondents consider that Barossa Council will ensure that Truro will participate effectively in decisions about local matters.

Pioneer Park, which remains Council Property, was designed and largely furnished by local volunteers. There was no prior consultation regarding installation of the EV Charging Station in the Park provided by RAA. MMC staff were too busy with river towns due to the flood to attend a meeting with RAA. We have just celebrated the conclusion to this project in June 2026 which was promised to be completed in January-February 2025.

Locals have followed council's guidance by attending / supporting public consultation and have funded designs and plans, such as hiring a consultant to produce the Truro Town Plan, which fed into the URPS Truro Master Plan. We hired Wax Designs for a concept plan on the vacant block formerly owned by the Golden Grill, Mogas and the Sherwood family, but are experiencing lack of priority and support from MMC.

- **Residents should receive adequate and fair representation within the local government system, while over-representation in comparison with councils of a similar size and type should be avoided (at least in the longer term)**

The Truro respondents consider that local Truro and District residents will receive adequate and fairer representation in Barossa Council.

We have in the past been inconsistently represented in Mid Murray Council. There has been patchy MMC representation to TDCA meetings over the past year. Some of this is understandable, given the distance which must be covered by any Council Representative, an hour or more drive vs fifteen minutes from Nuriootpa. Every Council election the Community Association asks for local personages to stand for Council, but none have responded. There is simply no attraction to the Council or its affairs.

- **A scheme that provides for the performance of functions and delivery of services in relation to 2 or more councils (for example, a scheme for regional governance) may improve councils' capacity to deliver services on a regional basis and therefore offer a viable and appropriate alternative to structural change**

The Truro respondents consider regional governance may improve both councils' capacity to deliver services, but that this is beyond the scope of our proposal and will rely on considerable negotiations between Barossa and Mid Murray councils.

We are aware that these services have existed but have been discontinued and are no longer available. We mentioned the Barossa Community car.

Mid Murray and Barossa councils collaborated on the creation of the Truro CBD's Consolidated Water Management Scheme, in which Truro's wastewater is piped to a recycling facility at Stockwell in the Barossa.

Our member Andrew Young speaks regularly with both mayors, and behind the scenes is trying to facilitate a meeting with them and the Local Government Minister to discuss some of these issues.

[APPENDIX-Simone Bailey, MMC Mayor on Council's Funding needs:](#)

Barossa Leader, 9 October 2024

Mid Murray Council Mayor, Simone Bailey has made a heartfelt plea for greater financial assistance on behalf of her community and Council ratepayers at a recent public hearing, as part of an ongoing Federal inquiry into local government sustainability.

A clearly emotional Mayor Bailey delivered her opening statement to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Development, Infrastructure and Transport on September 27 via phone link, expressing the "heartbreak" she and other Elected Members felt making recent decisions to cut Council services in order to make savings.

"Can you imagine the heartbreak of deciding to stop operating a town swimming pool in a town of 3,000 people just to save \$32,000? That's the decision our council made last month," Mayor Bailey said in her statement.

"Imagine the anguish of a local farmer who cancelled his car insurance to pay his council rates, only to have an accident weeks later.

"These are decisions that our community face daily, decisions that weigh on our hearts and spirits. I hear stories like these constantly: elderly neighbours battling cancer cutting back on electricity because they can't afford their Council rates, a woman in Mannum left with \$11 a fortnight for food after paying her bills.

"Meanwhile, our council was forced to increase rates by 6.83 per cent while simultaneously cutting services to remain financially sustainable. Something is deeply wrong."

The inquiry, launched in March this year, was set up in order to examine and understand local government financial sustainability and funding frameworks, alongside changing infrastructure requirements and service delivery obligations.

Submissions were invited until May 31, with public hearings taking place across Australia.

According to the program for the hearing held at SA's Parliament House last month, the committee also heard submissions from City of Tea Tree Gully, Mount Barker District Council, Southern Mallee District Council, District Council of Robe, City of Mount Gambier, District Council of Grant, Kingston District Council, City of Whyalla, Northern and Yorke LGA, and the Essential Services Commission of South Australia.

At least four of the councils heard, including Mid Murray, have previously had their financial positions deemed "potentially unsustainable" by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia.

In her submission, Mayor Bailey highlighted the "steady decline" of Financial Assistance Grants received against Council's assessed need as being one of its greatest challenges.

"Last year we received \$4 million in FA Grants, while we are grateful for that funding, it was just 36 per cent of our assessed need, due to Federal legislation that mandates 30 per cent of these grants be distributed per capita and the pool of funding not being large enough for the need in South Australia," she said.

"That \$7 million shortfall is equal to a 44 per cent of our rate income. This inequity is devastating, we are cutting services and disposing assets, but what happens in the coming years when there's nothing left to cut or sell?"

Mayor Bailey provided a supporting submission from the Principal of Cambrai Primary School, Leila Kasprzak, in which Ms Kasprzak advocates strongly for better outcomes for her students

and wider community, many of whom are shown to be buckling under the weight of economic and social hardship.

"We are already a very disadvantaged area. The school I manage has an Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage that place us in the lowest 14th percentile in Australia," Ms Kasprzak wrote.

"...Cambrai and the surrounding districts have not received any significant rainfall in one burst for over six years. Families have been carting household water from the town stand pipe for six plus years.

"The crops which were planted in the last few years have largely been turned over to feed stock as they are not worth reaping. Dust storms are far more common than rain. Our families struggled emotionally and financially with COVID-19.

"The school itself operates a community pantry where parents and community members can come in to collect bread, milk and canned food at no cost.

"...The Mid-Murray is hurting, and it has been for a long time. The inequitable funding that forces our local government to continually increase costs from these families, while reducing services is not fair.

"It is hurting families. It is hurting children. It is hurting our future. There is so much pride and connection in this community. Funding models need to address equity and justice because the reality is there is no equality in the current arrangements for local government."

Concluding her statement to the committee, Mayor Bailey referenced Council's standpipe review, which will be considered by Council later this month, flagging the potential closure of town water to a number of Mid Murray communities due to unsustainable financial losses maintaining the service.

"Standpipes are not a service that Councils should be providing, however we do as we always do and step in when there is as a community need but unfortunately we can't continue doing this," she said.

"Our staff are wearing multiple hats and working long hours, they are stretched to the breaking point. The recent floods, on top of ongoing financial challenges, have only made it worse...

"We need fair funding. We desperately need the Federal Government to help not only our community, but regional communities like ours across the country."

APPENDIX- Simone Bailey, MMC Mayor on Truro's place in Council's Growth Strategy

Barossa Leader, 7 May 2025

Truro is set to become one of three Mid Murray Council townships to benefit from increased infrastructure and development investment, under the Draft Mid Murray Growth Management and Housing Strategy released for community consultation last week.

The strategy, authored by URPS and paid for in part by a \$340,933 grant from the Federal Government's Housing Support Program, was developed by an "iterative process", involving

stakeholder and community engagement, and outlines a framework for land use planning, infrastructure investment and service provision for the region.

It identifies Truro, Swan Reach and Mannum as the three main "focus areas" Council should be directing its attention to.

"Basically the strategy at the moment is that Mannum, Truro and Swan Reach will receive priority for infrastructure and development support," Mid Murray Council Mayor Simone Bailey told The Leader last week.

"Council will remain committed to enabling the broader regional growth where feasible, but that's sort of where we'll be looking at spending most of our time on.

"Basically if we focus investment on these key townships, then the region can accommodate population and economic expansion in a way that is co-ordinated and sustainable and beneficial for the wider community.

"Truro in itself presents some really good opportunities for housing development, particularly where it complements the existing infrastructure and strategic connection to the Barossa region and access to Adelaide."

The report breaks the 6,273km² council area into three key geographical regions - ranges, plains and river; and nine planning areas - Morgan and surrounds, Blanchetown and surrounds, Truro and Surrounds, Swan Reach and surrounds, Mannum and surrounds, Keyneton-Sedan-Cambrai, Walker Flat-Nildottie-Purnong, Tungkillo-Palmer-Sanderston, and Ponde-Younghusband.

'Township objectives' and 'development opportunities' for each are identified and discussed as part of the draft strategy.

Positioned as a "a gateway to the Riverland or the Barossa", Truro's objectives include leveraging its strategic location, facilitating land development, investment in public spaces, improving connectivity, and the promotion of economic growth.

The town's Masterplan, endorsed by Council in October 2023 to support the town's economic future under the likelihood of a freight bypass project progressing, will be implemented as part of the strategy.

"...We're really lucky that Truro has developed that Masterplan so we have an idea where we need to go for Truro," Mayor Bailey said.

"... A lot of the reasoning for the growth in Truro would be that we do expect that they will have the freight route going around them... so it's definitely been a consideration with the growth plan, and we can't wait to see that go ahead."

Last July, some residents of Truro launched a petition to advocate for the re-alignment of council boundaries in order to bring Truro under the purview of The Barossa Council, due to proximity of services and desire for infrastructure investment.

It garnered over 100 signatures and, according to one of the organisers, was submitted to the Local Government Boundaries Commission for consideration towards the end of last year.

Mayor Bailey said the submission didn't factor into the development of the draft strategy.

"At the moment, they're still part of our Council, they're still paying rates so we'll continue to have them in all of these growth strategies," she said.

"If they end up going that way, then we'll share that with The Barossa Council or whatever happens. At the moment we'll just play it as is, they're part of our Council area and we're looking at any growth that they support and we'll go from there."

Mayor Bailey said while statistical data had been used to help inform the draft strategy, community feedback will play an important role in shaping the final plan.

"For the Council we don't have (growth) targets as such, but we're going with some of the statistical data that's available, and it does say that Mannum will be a growth area and it does say that the Barossa will be a growth area... But again, (we're) open to community feedback because they might not want that," she added.

"We do know that some of the feedback was looking like Keyneton might be a really good area for growth, but the feedback from the community was that they didn't want that. So we've steered clear from that, based on that community feedback.

"So this is a really great opportunity for the community to get out and have their say, because like I said, this will lead to where we'll look for grant opportunities or where we place infrastructure development over the next coming years."

APPENDIX – Letter from MMC CEO



Ref No: OCORR2281-26

14 April 2026

Elizabeth Giles – President
Chris Fox - Secretary
Truro & District Community Association Inc

Dear Elizabeth and Chris

Re: Review of Council Owned Community Buildings/Facilities

Council is currently undertaking a review of Council owned land and buildings as part of its ongoing commitment to financial sustainability and effective asset management.

This review includes community-run halls and buildings and is being conducted on a case-by-case basis. In each instance, Council is considering the long-term sustainability of the assets, ongoing maintenance responsibilities, and the role the facility plays within the local community.

As the lessee of Truro Hall, Oval and Tennis Club, Council is seeking input from Truro & District Community Association (the Association) to better understand your long-term vision for these facilities and additionally the Old Truro Council Chambers. In particular, Council is interested in the Association's future plans for the buildings and land, any intentions regarding ongoing leasing or management arrangements, and whether the Association may wish to explore ownership of the facilities should Council proceed with a community land revocation process in accordance with the [Local Government Act 1999](#) and Council's [Disposal of Land and Assets Policy](#).

Your feedback will assist Council in understanding how the facility is used and valued by the community and in considering future options for the properties.

Please forward your response to Council's Governance Officer, Vicki Bell-Booth, at vbell-booth@mid-murray.sa.gov.au. Alternatively, contact Vicki on 8569 0100 to arrange a meeting should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Council appreciates the important role community organisations play in managing and supporting local facilities and thanks you for taking the time to provide your input.

Regards,

Ben Scales
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

All correspondence to PO Box 28, Mannum SA 5238 ABN 88 313 305 455
Email postbox@mid-murray.sa.gov.au Web www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au

Mannum – Principal Office
49 Adelaide Road, Mannum, SA
Telephone: (08) 8569 0100

Cambrai Office
Main Street, Cambrai, SA
Telephone: (08) 8569 0100

Morgan & Districts Community Hub
Cnr Fourth & Eighth Street, Morgan, SA
Telephone: (08) 8569 0100