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30 July 2015

IPART  
Lodged Online

Dear Sir / Madam,

**RE: SUBMISSION TO IPART  
GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL'S DRAFT FIT FOR THE FUTURE PROPOSAL**

The Glen Innes Severn Council's (GISC) Fit For the Future submission has been prepared with emphasis on the inclusion of a 'key strategy' to improve performance as "Increasing the size of Council's area with possible boundary adjustments to include areas such as Ben Lomond, Llangothlin, Kingsland, Kings Plains, and Swanvale (part)." This strategy is not consistent with the Fit For the Future guidelines or methodology, and would have a negative impact on the ability of Guyra Shire Council to deliver our Rural Council Proposal. As such, it is requested that consideration not be given to this aspect of the Glen Innes Severn Council's submission during the assessment conducted by IPART.

Despite representation and submissions to the Glen Innes Severn Council by members of the communities identified in their proposal, the Glen Innes Severn Council states a premise that these communities "have clear communities of interest with Glen Innes." Through the Guyra Shire Council consultation process these statements were found to be false and misleading. There is a strong desire by these communities to remain part of the Guyra Shire, under the Rural Council proposal.

Guyra Shire Council undertook extensive community consultation to give consideration of the unique requirements of our entire community. Guyra Shire Council considered, at its Ordinary Meeting held on 27 April 2015, the draft proposal of the Glen Innes Severn Council, where it was subsequently resolved that Council strongly object to any proposed boundary adjustments in Fit For the Future proposals by neighbouring Councils, Armidale Dumaresq, Glen Innes Severn, and Inverell Shire. It is noted that the Glen Innes Severn Council's draft proposal involves significant boundary adjustments to the Guyra Shire and a recommendation for the Guyra Shire and Armidale Dumaresq councils to amalgamate. The Guyra Shire Council objects to this proposition, as representation by members of the affected community have indicated a strong connection with the Guyra Shire Council, and identified that their community of interest is Guyra. The Guyra Shire Council have a very good working relationship with these communities to deliver the services they require, in an effective and efficient way. Additionally, our community have made it very clear that an amalgamation with Armidale Dumaresq Council would be detrimental to the social, cultural, and community aspects of the Guyra Shire.

The Glen Innes Severn Council received a number of submissions on behalf of ratepayers and residents who would be potentially impacted by their proposed boundary adjustments, to which their report to Council stated "The submissions received from the Ben Lomond residents and other

Guyra Shire residents are, with all due respect, not worthy of Council's consideration at this point in time..." This statement is not conducive to good community consultation or relationships, and provides evidence to the lack of engagement the Glen Innes Severn Council has with the communities which they are claiming have a "clear communities (sic) of interest with Glen Innes."

The aforementioned draft proposal also stated that *"These adjustments have been discussed with the relevant parties (Guyra Shire, Armidale Dumaresq, Inverell Shire and Tenterfield Shire Councils) and there is some in-principle agreement."* Guyra Shire Council does not agree to any proposed boundary adjustments, as this will impact on our ability to be 'Fit For the Future' and retain our local representation, which is so vehemently supported by the Guyra Shire community.

Guyra Shire Council approached the Glen Innes Severn Council to discuss the other innovative opportunities identified in the Fit For the Future process to achieve scale and capacity, other than merely increasing size and population. Guyra Shire Council representatives and Councillors met with the Glen Innes Severn Council to discuss options under each of our adopted proposal templates that do not jeopardise the sustainability, efficiency, and local identity of either entity. The changes to their draft proposal requested by Guyra Shire Council were not met, and their proposal has a direct negative impact on the Guyra Shire Council's submission to remain an independent Rural Council.

Guyra Shire Council requests that IPART not consider any key strategy of the Glen Innes Severn Council that involves boundary adjustments affecting any other Local Government Area, on the basis of advice provided by IPART. This advice was available in the form of the transcript from the Sydney Public Forum held on 11 May 2015, where it states "you can't put in a proposal which involves part another Council...without having that Council sign off. So you can't put in a proposal which in a sense is a request for a boundary change..."

Yours Sincerely,

  
**PETER STEWART**  
**GENERAL MANAGER**