

From: Barbara McGregor
Sent: Saturday, 4 July 2015 2:01 PM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Cc: 'Clover Moore'
Subject: Fit for the Future Proposals: NO to council amalgamations.

Having been an Australian-born voter for 50 years, and having lived in various parts of Sydney during that time, I have wearied of the rorts and vested interest featherbedding that has occurred in the State of New South Wales, both at the Macquarie street State level of power and in some shocker Council areas, now laid waste by mindless high rise buildings without sufficient green space and suffering increased social distress, delinquency and crime.

Well do I remember the developer friendly years of Askin, Wran, Greiner, Carr and cohorts. Eras when politicians and their mates have grown rich and the egalitarian philosophy of the founding fathers of Federation, of equality of opportunity for all, has been eroded.

As to Councils, one only has to compare, for example, Waverley to Woollahra and Warringah to Pittwater to recognise the gross disparity in town planning and concern for citizens demonstrated in their environs and amenities.

Sydney is a city of villages. The attempt to homogenise our urban villages in the name of economy and convenience is laughable, if it were not so serious in its long term impact on our society and quality of life.

The possibility of 'savings' is notional. The probability of advancing the interests of power brokers is certain.

What is the real agenda here? Are you wanting to create UK style mega councils? If so, that would include the devolution of responsibility for social welfare including social housing, hospital and medical area management, and education – and thus the lessening of power to be exercised at State level. Is the real plan to end up with increased power at Federal level and Mega-Councils, with a diminished or eliminated State tier of government? Will New South Wales become a number of regions, overseen out of Canberra within the next 50-100 years?

This is hardly the product of conservative philosophy and an irony that the proposal for centralisation, socialisation and bureaucratisation of our community management system has been put forward under a so called 'liberal' government.

What is needed is more local participation, more community involvement and more immediate focus on town planning, on the human scale - not an expanded agglomerated operational model for 'local' government that is no longer local.

NO to amalgamation of Councils in New South Wales.
NO to greater power for State institutions.
NO to greater power for politicians, at any level.

NO to more inaccessible, covert exercise of power by unelected bureaucrats over wider areas, in the name of 'efficiency' – a totalitarian model if ever there were one.

B J McGregor