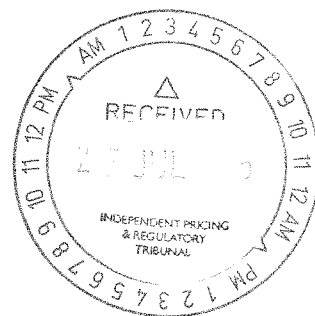


[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
24<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Local Government Team  
IPART  
P.O. Box K35  
HAYMARKET POST SHOP  
NSW 1240



Dear Sirs

My purpose in writing to the review is to express my grave concerns over any move to forcibly amalgamate councils especially the suggestion that Walcha Council join with Uralla. There is also the proposal that Walcha and Uralla amalgamate with Guyra and Armidale Dumaresq which would cover a very large & diverse area.

I have been actively involved in many organisations in the Walcha Community over many years and am proud of the great community spirit which exists. Currently one of my positions is the secretary of the Walcha Show Society and I also represented the Central Northern Group of Show Societies on the N.S.W. Agricultural Societies Council for many years. Walcha has a proud reputation within the show movement as one of the best shows in the region and this includes the large centres surrounding us of Armidale and Tamworth. This reputation is due in no small part to the tremendous support the people of the community give to the show.

This same support is evident in many sporting organisations as evident in the highly successful Walcha Bushman's Campdraft & Rodeo Association carnival, the Walcha Jockey Clubs annual Walcha Cup horse races and many other sporting groups. Charitable fund raising groups are also very strong in our community. Again the Walcha community puts the larger centres such as Armidale to shame both in total amounts raised and in the per capita effort made.

This sense of community extends to the Walcha Council. The councilors and staff are local residents with a commitment to maintaining the high standards of the community, free from any external political pressures and influences. They are in close contact with residents with many holding executive positions in community organisations.

If a forced amalgamation occurred a lot of these people would be lost to our community and moved to the large centre where the council already boast of how their community will benefit. This is of course done to the detriment of the smaller communities.

Governments should be looking at ways to support the development of the smaller, closer knit communities where social conditions, quality of life, security and peace of mind are all better than the large centres.

The experience of smaller centres within amalgamated councils is that they lose their representation owing to the larger population out voting the smaller areas and loss of representation is followed by loss of services.

Please keep our wonderful community and its council together.

Yours faithfully  
Don Murchie

[REDACTED]