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Submission: It is a strong sense of local identity that attracts retirees to settle in Oberon and induces people to establish businesses and invest in the town. To submerge Oberon into a mega-council would not be in the public interest and is not the wish of the people. Amalgamation was unanimously opposed in 2013 in submissions to the State Government, the Minister for Local Government and to the Upper House Committee. Oberon was victorious in this campaign and has prospered since then.

At present Oberon has no direct contact with a major state highway. It has always been “off the beaten track” but recently, with the commissioning of the tar-sealed Abercrombie Rd there is now excellent all-weather access to the south, connecting Oberon to Goulburn and Canberra also bringing increased traffic and tourists to the town. Oberon is now on an important road from large centres in the south and no longer a “dead end” destination. This remarkable feat of road upgrade was achieved purely by the persistent efforts, agitation and petition of the townspeople.

Oberon's main industry is timber particularly softwood, which is grown in the high country and not in the lower altitudes of the Bathurst basin. The Oberon Council naturally has a vested interest in maintaining this as a viable business enterprise and so has close contacts with the timber/forest industry.

The timber mills and associated processing plants in Oberon are not only the biggest industries in the Central Tablelands, but the biggest plants of their type in the southern hemisphere. Possibly a billion dollars has been invested in them. They provide employment not only for Oberon, but for many neighbouring towns including Bathurst. They are the backbone of the local economy.

Forestry, agriculture and tourism are the other mainstays of the local economy. Oberon's greatest tourist asset is Jenolan Caves. For many years the caves were the premier tourist destination in NSW and today they still draw a vast crowd. Recently, the establishment of the Mayfield Gardens to the west of the town has provided another major drawcard for tourists. These gardens are the world's largest cool climate gardens and are projected to significantly contribute to the local economy.

Oberon is a mountain town not a western town and identifies with the cultural mores of the mountains. The Oberon Tourist Association has close links with Blue Mountains Tourism. The market it has identified is integral with the Blue Mountains area. The future growth of Oberon's tourist industry is reliant on maintaining that working relationship. This very active local organisation is vehemently opposed to any amalgamation

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