

Amalgamation Proposal



29 July 2015

The Chief Executive Officer  
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW  
PO Box Q290, QVB PO  
NSW 1230

Dear CEO,

OPPOSITION TO AMALGAMATION OF LAKE MACQUARIE AND NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCILS

I submit for consideration by IPART my reasons for opposing any amalgamation of LMCC and NCC by the State Government under its Fit for the Future program targeting councils to be efficient and sustainable.

I base my reasons on the following experiences:

- (a) My continuous professional association (non- political and non- financial) with the operations and delivery of services by LMCC for 40 years (1959-1990);
- (b) As a ratepayer in LMCC area for 51 years (1964-Present) and taking a personal interest in LMCC'S decision making and service delivery and this has included making submissions to council.

My reasons for opposing this proposed amalgamation are:

1. No proposal for an amalgamation has been initiated by either council;
2. No reasons have been advanced by the State Government for consideration by the communities of either council on this proposal to show how this union would give us a better, stronger, more economic and efficient local government system. Altering boundaries and uniting local government areas in an endeavour to strengthen local government will not alone provide us with a better, stronger and more economical and sustainable local government;
3. Amalgamations and structural changes to council areas should only be made if people would benefit. Change for the sake of change must not be allowed to happen;
4. LMCC, as a stand- alone local government area consistently shows it is about people and the way it can serve people and it provides efficient and economical benefits to it community;
5. An amalgamation with NCC would spoil the harmonious relationship between the people of Lake Macquarie and their council. Big is not always beautiful;
6. LMCC has its own distinct geographical identity and is centred on the beautiful name-sake Lake Macquarie;
7. An amalgamation would not necessarily achieve a greater revenue potential for the Lake Macquarie community;

8. Population growth is occurring in Lake Macquarie and as a stand-alone council it can meet with credit its future development. I also applaud the way Lake Macquarie also balances environmental care with development. Some councils away from the coast are experiencing reductions in population and uniting these into larger land-based areas to provide more economical administration and planning and greater value from the rate payer's dollar may be justified;
9. Lake Macquarie City Council has adequate, effective and orderly planning and proper, economical and efficient local government under existing conditions.

I hope my submission as to why Lake Macquarie City Council is well positioned as a stand-alone local government area to continue delivering efficient and sustainable outcomes to its community will receive due consideration by the Tribunal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments.

Yours faithfully

John Le Messurier

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