

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

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DRAPER SLAMS COUNCIL TAKE-OVER BID

Member for Tamworth, Peter Draper has hit out at the attempt by Armidale Dumaresq Council to take-over the Walcha Shire, calling the bid "predatory and unsound".

"Walcha Shire Council is one of the most respected and well-run Councils in the region" said Mr Draper today.

"There is absolutely no justification for this Council to be caught up in an amalgamation dispute with other Councils when it has proved itself to be an efficiently run organization that meets the needs of its population".

"Walcha is a unique area that is unlikely to have its interests represented as effectively if consumed by Armidale Dumaresq Council.

"I will be working with the Member for Northern Tablelands, Richard Torbay, to ensure that the interests of our smaller Shires are not overshadowed by the desire of city-centric bureaucrats to draw bigger lines on the local government map" said Mr Draper.

"I have written to the Minister for Local Government rejecting out of hand any suggestion that Walcha should be amalgamated into Armidale Dumaresq. I have also requested that any public hearings into this proposal be heard in Walcha, not Sydney or Armidale, so that the views of the Walcha community can be heard".

"This kind of predatory action on the part of larger Councils, to take-over well managed and healthy smaller Shires is unacceptable, and I will be opposing it all the way to Macquarie Street" concluded Mr Draper.

www.peterdraper.com.au

Media Contacts: Peter Draper mob. 0417 290 376 Electorate Office ph. 6766 1422
Parliament House ph. 9230 2341