

FUTURE OF WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL	
Response Text	Responses
As the owner of two properties how much will rates go up?	A likely minimum of another 12.5% but could be more
How are we going to keep our identity if we are forced to amalgamate.	This is a challenge evidence in other areas is not good for small communities
Would the concept of a Rural Council if followed through, still provide adequate representation and some degree of employment security for senior staff if implemented??	Yes there is protection for staff and community representation in this model - subject to negotiation
Can we be viable on our own	Yes but would be helped by a future small rate increase less than if amalgamated and a change to the Federal Assistance grants (FAGs)
Weddin has plenty of money, which council has saved sensibly , other councils are broke, why amalgamate and be worse off.	Noted
Grenfell Shire is fluid, why are they considered unfit?	because the Government now wants us to fund depreciation and hasn't yet changed the FAGs
Yes will we be any better off than we are now as nothing happens in Greenethorpe now. Some are houses are unkept	Noted
How will amalgamation affect small rural communities that currently received only token Council support	Evidence in Victoria is it will be less support and services in Grenfell might decrease
If we don't amalgamate how will Council support its ageing population & rural areas	This is a major issue as labour is needed to do this
Will rural roads eg gravel arterial road be improved	Unlikely and possibly have lower service
Why amalgamate profitable Council's that are run better than NSW Govnt	Noted
Where will this leave urgent roadwork repairs such as Blacks Bridge at Greenethorpe	Unclear
What Council's are we looking to merge with?	The nominated possibilities were Cowra and / or Forbes
How will Greenethorpe benefit? You talk of Grenfell Medical Centre & a new pool	No likely change may be worse. These facilities are important to attracting labour
take the money while it is available to keep pace with every day cost on your own, rates will go through the roof	No guarantee the money would be spent in Weddin

What happens to employment in Grenfell	There may be a deskilling over time
Will our rates remain as they are at present? Will our services be reduced under amalgamation?	Rates will increase over time and services cannot be guaranteed
Will the council building at Grenfell be manned or made redundant? Are there going to be any public meetings advertised relevant to the amalgamation and will more information be available because at the moment it is very unclear what an amalgamation would look like, so it's hard to have an opinion other than blind fear.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
More information required re-amalgamation?	The information that we have has been provided.
Can the NSW Govt assure us that rates will not rise now will these be any loss of positions on Council (indoor or outdoor).	It might be that the Govt will have a moratorium on increases for say 3 years but not confirmed
The Lions Club has worked in close liason with Council over many years in many areas to the benefit of the town & district	Noted with much appreciation
What is going to happen to existing monies, job security.	Funds will be amalgamated into the new Council
How many jobs lost, is our money to bail Forbes out and is there assurance the Weddin Shire doesn't deteriorate	Funds will be amalgamated into the new Council
Are there ANY benefits to Weddin Shire? Guaranteed only - not vague promises	No guarantee the money would be spent in Weddin
How will Weddin Shire benefit?	No clear benefit
Where would main office be? 1 or 2 mayors? loss of jobs etc? Does Grenfell Council money get spent on Grenfell? - money invested.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
If Weddin Shire Council has been deemed "unfit" by IPART what is the reason and is there no way of rectifying the situation?	Increase in FAGs and a review of funding depreciation
Our town has done very nicely in the past lets keep it for the future.	Noted
Do you think a public meeting should be held to get the media, TV etc, involved more?	Meeting being held now survey is complete and Minister Toole has been met the Mayor
This council to keep going the way it is we have no complaints.	Noted with much appreciation
What portion of the \$10 M would come into the "Weddin" Shire? What about the great financial reputation of Weddin - does that not count?	No guarantee the money would be spent in Weddin
I've been wondering if this amalgamation will put a stop to the new medical centre and swimming pool and any further improvement to Grenfell.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees However, Council has commenced so unlikely.
Is Weddin Shire still in "the black" as far as expenditure is concerned ?	Yes Weddin is in the Black but needs to continually improve and also needs a change in FAGs grants

For what duration is the security of jobs for the Weddin Shire workforce? What guarantees if any are in place for future infrastructure spending within the existing Weddin Shire?	3 years for current positions. For the broad number of staff the numbers will be retained subject to labour plan
Do we really need a state government, Whats our local member doing?	Noted
What strategic plan does WSC have if amalgamation occurs?	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
What is the point is asking a question the NSW Government do not want to answer	A question for the local member
*Council should continue to fight against amalgamation	This is to be determined by Council
If forced to amalgamate do we still have some control of the funding within our existing Council area?	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
Could the government use a completely independent, no biased, party to assess our fitness for the future?	The boundaries commission is the process for doing this as part of an amalgamation process
* next to no opinion - is without clarification on same issues How will local staff members be affected? and 2. How will councillors be appointed, by proportional representation of other?	3 years for current positions. For the broad number of staff the numbers will be retained subject to labour plan. Representation will be determined by the minister unless Weddin Volunteers to Amalgamate
Generally I do not support amalgamation but need to know that the NSW "final process" would be and what a Rural Council model would be to honestly answer this question?	These are all unclear.
If we amalgamate would the distributions of money be equal?	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
why is the state government breaking it's promise of no forced amalgamation?	Noted
How is it going to make a difference to me and my family	In other places has lead to increased rates and were services
Can we afford to continue as a stand alone council? Will we be penalised by reduced grants?	This is a challenge evidence in other areas is not good for small communities
Why? When the Labour Government was pushing this issue, the Lib/Nat opposition opposed amalgamation.	Noted
How can the govnt find the shires fit in one instance and not in another. what criteria is used to predict the future	This is complex but reflects a different set of criteria
Will our local member fully oppose amalgamation? or sit on the fence?	This is an issue for the local member - but it appears that she will support the decision of the community

All shires in Sydney do not want it. Why not go with them?	This will be a decision of the government
Has anyone shown that this will be any benefit to the Weddin Shire	Weddin has done the analysis on the Ratios and an amalgamated body is not on the surface likely to be more 'fit'
What action can be taken that will save the Weddin Shire	It is a political process now - changes in the FAGs grants will assist
Why amalgamate when we run the Council well, and not in trouble or debt?	There seems little benefit
Will existing Council funds stay in the existing shire?	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
How does amalgamation advantage Weddin Shire? in my opinion centralisation is not always the answer to problems	This is a challenge evidence in other areas is not good for small communities
What will happen to monetary funds machinery & equipment all supplied by the rate payers if we amalgamate.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
If amalgamated with a number of other Councils, how can we be assured that Weddin Council's views, or opinions, will be listened to, let alone acted upon.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
What are the pros & cons	There seem to be few benefits that are able to be costed. There seems to be a political view that bigger is better
If we amalgamate who will it be with and who will be the major centre.	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
Who are IPART & who puts them there?	IPART are appointed by the Government and are independent however staff from the Office of Local Government were seconded to IPART to determine
Does our local member support the amalgamation?	No written opposition - but has She will support the community views
Where is the benefit to ratepayers from this proposed change	Nothing that is documented
Will Grenfell still have its own identity? How can an amalgamation be in the best interest of our town?	Unclear
Why is Weddin Shire deemed to be unfit? We all know this is a ridiculous finding. Our shire has been run efficiently for many years and residents are very appreciative and aware of the wonderful financial status of the Weddin Shire.	Noted with much appreciation
How come we have money in the bank still able to survive but we are unfit ?	The new standards are set to make it difficult to be 'fit' as we have to fund depreciation on a formula, not on real costs

the shire has only a small population over a large area WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE OUTLYING VILLAGES IF THERE IS AN AMALGAMATION???	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
How are they going to save money amalgamating ?	Unclear
Can the council be forced to amalgamate?	There are a number of processes available to the government under legislation and possibly other means
If we stand alone can Council still tender for main road works	Tenders would be undertaken by the amalgamated body
Why? when we were good along at first	The new standards are set to make it difficult to be 'fit' as we have to fund depreciation on a formula, not on real costs
How can Weddin Shire be eligible for grants but still financially unviable?	Unclear
What happens to Grenfell if all Councils around us amalgamate and we don't? Do you think we will be left alone?	Unclear
1. As so many others have asked, why were we fit for a rate increase in Feb, but not now? 2. Why is the State Govt in such a hurry to push through these changes? 3. Does the IPART model really take into account the differences between metro & rural councils?	Unclear
Where is the money coming from to pay the \$millions to councils that amalgamate or is the NSW Government hoping that all councils will be forced and thus they do not pay anything?	from Treasury - possibly sale of poles and wires
If we are forced to amalgamate will we still receive the new swimming pool?	This should be underway before any announcements
What guarantee do we have that our roads and facilities will be maintained to the high standards that we have already.	None
Why not be the mouse that roared and stay independent?	Noted
Will goods & services be purchased locally if amalgamated with a larger council?	No likely change as this is defined by legislation
I congratulate Council on the maturity of its approach in using a neutral survey rather than calling a public meeting at which it would take great courage to express the minority view or even ask questions.	Noted with much appreciation

I would appreciate IPART to explain why this decision has been made without prior consultation with rate payers/residents of the Weddin Shire.	Noted
Can we do it alone, without Government support. Shouldn't local (Weddin Shire) vehicle registration (or some of) still be allocated for our roads. Could the people handle the increase shire rates? Would they go sky high or a reasonable increase.	Funds from Grants are crucial to our ability to provide services
I am opposed but can we do it alone. Forget the pool, make cutbacks, like no more cars supplied for some Councillors - just work associated ute's that stay in the yard?? before and after work.	Funds from Grants are crucial to our ability to provide services
What capacity does IPART have to conduct and implement such unpopular and unwanted reform of Local Government.	The Government will eventually make the decision on advise from IPART and others
Where is Katrina Hodgkinson on this? Why were we considered fit earlier in the year and not now? Have the goalposts been moved to suit the NSW Governments objectives?	This is an issue for the local member - but it appears that she will support the decision of the community
NSW Government have not really told us the true benefits in amalgamating with another Council - what are they?	Unlikely and possibly have lower service
What changed between when IPART determined Weddin to be fit, and now when IPART has determined Weddin to be unfit?	The new standards are set to make it difficult to be 'fit' as we have to fund depreciation on a formula, not on real costs
If we are amalgamated with near neighbour who comes next Grenfell or who comes next	It is unclear if this is part of a cascading set of amalgamations to larger regional bodies
Is the NSW government hell bent on killing small country businesses and towns. Grenfell is going backwood as it is	Noted
How effectively was the time spent to reach the decision for fitness? Was this time sufficient for proper public discussion, examination & possible acceptance or rejection of any decision? would any original benefits as expounded in original considerations be applicable to present day situations?	The time frame was limited however the draft was published for comment. There was a community open day for people to come and discuss the framework. There are no appeal rights.
Do you think the State Govt undertook this exercise having already decided the outcome?	Unclear
will our rates go up to be inline with amalgamating council	communities
Can the LGA Shires launch a class action against NSW Gov't to prevent this?	No it would be unlikely to have standing

Why is the state government trying to destroy rural communities and close country towns!	Unclear when the staff numbers would stay the same anyway
How far behind is Council with its work program?	Council is not behind
would we still have our shire yard/and our council chambers were people would be able to pay there rates and what would happen to the jobs at the shire yard eg	This is unclear. The plans as to what would happen would be developed by a new amalgamated council. There are few guarantees
How will this effect the general quality of life in the Weddin Shire?	It would be difficult to attract skills to support community needs overtime, as evidenced in similar situations in Victoria
It will be great to get rid on individuals on council who refuse to support local businesses.	No likely change as this is defined by legislation