

*Appendix 1***Mary Walsh OAM – Community Advocate****Overview of Community and Business Background**

This overview will allow committee members to understand the background upon which the comments, contained in this submission are framed.

The comments combine my professional qualifications as a qualified accountant, financial adviser, holding a degree in accounting and local government, with 11 years as an elected Councillor for Bundaberg City Council – the last 4 years as the Chairman of Planning and Development during a time of unprecedented economic growth.

I have now retired from Local Government to concentrate on community advocacy, was a member of the Local Government Association of Queensland Social Policy Planning Group, one of 2 local government representatives on the National Local Government Association Taskforce on Ageing, a representative on the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Planning Advisory Committee – reporting to the relevant Queensland Minister - and, over 40 years, I have held many positions, locally, state and federally involving the needs of people with disability and vulnerable community groups.

I was Telstra’s Queensland Business Woman of the Year – for small business in 1998, one of 32 women nationally profiled in Telstra’s “How Women Succeed in Business” written by Pru Goward, and have just returned from the National, and Queensland 2020 Summits – where, as one of 1000 Australians I represented regional needs in the “Future directions for rural industries and rural communities” stream of the Summit, and continue to stay in touch, through the established networks of this group of regionally diverse attendees.

I have been a business/community representative of the Wide Bay Burnett Area Consultative Committee since 2004, but previously attended many of their meetings in earlier years as an observer on social and local government matters. As an ACC member I adhered to all the relevant conflict of interests requirements, and as I was not a member of the executive committee or management committee, making decisions about applications, my comments contain an awareness of the “other side of the fence” – where I actually know the work, and frustrations which occurred behind the scenes.

I was also a participant in the original Queensland State Government’s Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan, which has now been replaced by the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Plan from 2007-2026. My involvement in the first plan was as one of the inaugural founders of the Bundaberg Community Council – now Bundaberg – and District – Community Development, and I am still a member of its Board of Management..

