



22 JAN, 2024

## 'STAIN' ON BANK RECORD

Toowoomba Chronicle, Toowoomba



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## MP condemns NAB's closure of Pittsworth branch

'STAIN' ON  
BANK RECORD

Peta McEachern

A Toowoomba politician has taken aim at NAB after it announced it would be closing another regional branch, forcing residents to travel more than 30km to their nearest branch. Groom MP Garth Hamilton said the decision to shut the Pittsworth branch was a stain on the bank's record.

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## NAB closes rural branch

Groom MP  
criticises  
decision

Peta McEachern

One of the country's big four banks has announced it will be closing its Pittsworth branch, forcing rural customers to travel more than 30km to their closest bank.

In late 2023, the National Australia Bank received criticism after announcing the

closure of five branches across the nation, however now that number has grown, with 11 Queensland branches set to go.

NAB released a statement stating the closures were due to customers visiting banks less and preferring to use on-line or phone banking.

"Because of these changes, we've made the difficult decision to close our NAB Pittsworth branch at 75 Yandilla Street, Pittsworth, Qld, 4356 on Thursday, 18 April, 2024," the statement read.

"Of course, we'll keep helping (our customers) bank in other ways, and make sure this change is as smooth as poss-

ible."

NAB said Pittsworth customers who still used face-to-face banking could travel to their nearest branch at Drayton's Clifford Gardens Shopping Centre, Toowoomba.

"Closing a branch is always a difficult decision, and we understand the change can be a big adjustment for some customers," the statement read.

"Before the decision was made, we took a lot into consideration."

According to NAB's customer statistics, only seven per cent of its Pittsworth customers relied on face-to-face banking, and last year 61 per

cent of its customers attended the branch once, with 69 per cent of its customers already travelling to Clifford Gardens to do their banking.

However the closure will affect many regional customers, as 246 Pittsworth customers used the branch more than three times last year, and 60

customers attended the branch 60 times.

Groom MP and deputy chair of the standing committee on economics Garth Hamilton slammed the closure of the regional branch and said it was an example of, "a large corporate with the wrong pri-



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orities”.

“I am disappointed with NAB’s decision, this will reduce accessibility and make talking with your local banker harder,” he said.

“Being in Pittsworth it was clear locals were fed up with being treated like they don’t matter, switching banks was the clear option.”

The LNP politician took aim at NAB’s decision to close about 30 regional branches since March 2023, despite it turning a profit and spending \$1.5 million on its Voice campaign.

“NAB say they think locally, I don’t think they do,” he said.

“NAB said during the Voice campaign it was important to listen to regional voices, how do you do that if you keep closing regional bank branches?”

Mr Hamilton was a strong “No” supporter to the Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

Mr Hamilton also said in a statement the decision was a “stain” on NAB’s record.

“While this might improve the NAB’s bottom line, it is harmful to their reputation, and it’s people in the regions who will suffer, and they will remember.”

NAB encourages Pittsworth customers to use their local post office to withdraw cash, and deposit cash and cheques.

“For customers who make regular business deposits or require business change, additional options are available.”

For more information, contact your banker or transactional specialist, or call 1310 12.



**FED UP: Groom MP Garth Hamilton says a decision by National Australia Bank to close its Pittsworth branch will hurt the bank’s reputation. Picture: Kevin Farmer**