

Lane Cove Council votes to appeal against the merger

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Lane Cove Council voted five to two last week to continue its appeal against the procedure used to justify a forced merger with Hunters Hill and Ryde.



Lane Cove Mayor Deborah Hutchens protests against forced amalgamations. TWT on-the-spot PHOTO

Mayor Deborah Hutchens said the motion had a provision that Lane Cove could wait until the result of Woollahra Council's Supreme Court appeal against a forced merger with Waverley and Randwick but it is likely that the Lane Cove appeal will be lodged by December 19.

"Our appeal is very similar to the appeal launched by Hunters Hill Council although we are strongly arguing that the contiguous land argument wasn't adequately considered," Mayor Hutchens said.

"We hope the appeal will give us more time to exist as a council, at least until February but then we simply don't know what the Baird government will do."

Lane Cove Council has particular concerns that the Delegate's Report from the recent Boundary Commission hearing at the Hunters Hill Sailing Club did not give a fair go to the more than 80 per cent of speakers who opposed the proposed merger.

'I spoke twice at that hearing and our local Aboriginal elder Uncle Max gave a strongly worded speech on behalf of the traditional owners of the land,' she said.

"I will never accept the government's line that Lane Cove is unfit for the future and in fact we're one of the top three councils in New South Wales for efficiency and professionalism."

Independent Clr Pam Palmer unsuccessfully proposed an alternate motion to proceed with an appeal without reference to the Woollahra case.

"I thought our appeal should be simple and unconditional but I'm very happy with the outcome which moves us forward.

"I certainly don't want us to merge with the City of Ryde Council because in Lane Cove we're democratic, well governed and we like to get things done."

<http://www.weeklytimes.com.au/lane-cove-council-votes-to-appeal-against-the-merger/>