

Vast Majority Oppose Forced Mergers

BY OUR CIVIC ROUNDSMAN

More than eighty per cent of ratepayers from Hunters Hill, Lane Cove and Ryde who addressed last Tuesday's public hearing into forced council mergers held at the Hunters Hill Sailing Club told delegate Dr Robert Lang they are opposed to forced mergers.

Here is what they said ...

"Fortunately the government hasn't fallen for their (Hunters Hill Council) bluff and bluster. They've made us a laughing stock and this council's time is up." **Paul Ricketts**

"The amalgamation is inevitable," **Dr Aleister Sharp**

"In 2013 Lane Cove MP Anthony Roberts said that when it comes to councils, bigger isn't better and since then we haven't heard a word from him" **Doug Stewart**

"The Fit For The Future policy is flawed and patently unfair, we are being threatened by a powerful aggressor." **Cir Mark Bennett**

"Lane Cove Plaza is the centre of our community and I doubt that Macquarie Park will ever be seen as our community centre, it will only be property developers who will profit from this," **Susan Ingham**

"I want the new council to focus on jobs for youth," **David Banner**

"Hunters Hill is truly a unique area and we are not owners but trustees here and a trustee must have proximity and knowledge." **John Conlan**

"The Hunters Hill Trust will argue for the existing local planning controls, heritage listing and lot sizes," **Tony Coote**, Hunters Hill Trust

president

"This forced amalgamation will not happen because local communities will not wear it, this is an attack on local democracy, a flawed proposal doomed to failure," former Councillor **Phil Jenkyn**

"Our Lane Cove Council has served our community well in the past and deserves to continue," former Lane Cove mayor **Bill Henningham**

"I come from Lane Cove and I'm more affiliated with Chatswood than I am with Ryde," **David Cahill**

"The forced merger cost is \$76 million and the State Government is offering us \$25 million, that's a \$50 million cost to ratepayers and we'll only be digging a hole for ourselves." **Guy Hallows**

"Hunters Hill Council is too small to be viable and amalgamation is inevitable," former Hunters Hill councillor **Chris Schofield**

"We need to get beyond the fear campaign run by the councils and the local newspaper, this is a real opportunity to have a clean sweep," **Don Ingham**

"Ryde will incur costs, not benefits," **John Curtees**

"I am shocked the government can make a promise about no forced amalgama-

tions and then break it, this is morally wrong," **Marilyn Lawson**

"This will be the end of an era for Independent councillors," **Tom Lawson**

"In Hunters Hill we will be on the fringe of a mega council with no chance of saving ourselves and represented by no councillor who is not a member of the Liberal Party," **Cir Peter Astridge**

"In a forced merger Lane Cove will lose its identity and I fear our community services," Lane Cove Mayor **Cir Deborah Hutchens**

"Lane Cove supports its community far more than Ryde does, if this merger goes ahead our patients will no longer have the quality of support they have now." **Gillian Batt**



Dr Meredith Bayfield.

"In Hunters Hill we will lose our voice and our capac-



Dr Robert Lang

ity to control planning," **Dr Meredith Bayfield.**



John Birch AM

"Undoubtedly the reason for Fit For The Future is to increase the power of property developers in Hunters Hill," **John Birch AM**

"The rules and the process keeps changing when they don't meet the Baird Government's expectations," **John Dressler**

"This is an opportunity for us to share the best of the best, I see an upside to this," **Peter Funnell**

"Geographic continuity should be the rule but this has been perversely violated, the merger ignores geographic connectedness," **Brad Powell**

"We've found people willing to lie down in front of bulldozers to protect our heritage and environment in Hunters Hill," **Brigid Ryan**

"The Hunters Hill howitzer would not have been saved by a mega council, but it was saved by our local community supported by our Council," **Richard White**

"Ryde has a history of political fighting along party political lines, I defy the government to find a better group of councillors than our councillors in Hunters Hill," **Cir Justine McLaughlin**

"I've lived in Hunters Hill for 40 years and I'd be happy to pay an extra \$100 a year in rates to keep Hunters Hill as it is," **Michael E.**

"This is a dysfunctional State Government projecting dysfunction on local government," **Peter Hawthorn**

"In Meadowbank we're not opposed in principle to amalgamation, if services can be shown to improve," **Robert Renew**

"What do Lane Cove citizens have in common with Ryde? Not a lot! We have more in common with North Sydney," **Christina Lloyd.**



Rose Lavery

"Ryde MP Victor Dominello seems intent on destroying my City of Ryde. His State Government is acting like a group of spoiled children," former Ryde Councillor **Rose Lavery**

"The Mayors are overstating their council's role in my local identity, my local community is not defined by council boundaries," **Martin Hoffman**

"I look forward to the State Government resolving our issues in Gladesville, because the council won't," **Russell Young.**

"I live in Marsfield and I'm very disappointed our local MP hasn't stood up for our local community," **Michael Butterworth**



Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans

has all been propaganda and a major corruption of due process," **Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans.**



Cllr David Brooks-Horn

"In Lane Cove if people want to talk to a councillor they meet us in the Plaza or just pick up the phone, we are a model council, a benchmark," former Lane Cove Liberal mayor **Cllr David Brooks-Horn**

"For every five people who spoke here tonight, four out of five oppose forced amalgamations," **Cllr Mark Cole**

"It is now more important than ever to make sure our local voices are heard and acted upon," **Cllr Soo-Tee Cheong**

"Lane Cove was assessed to be unfit for the future because we had no debt, that is absolutely ridiculous," former Lane Cove Liberal mayor **Cllr Scott Bennison**

"The government wants for political reasons to suit property developers, the community doesn't want a merger," **Dr Graham Holland**

"We are being forced to justify why our democratically elected councillors in Lane Cove should remain. A mega council will be built on the decisions of others," **Dr Ruth Newman**



Ron Kaplan

"This is a drastic move and we will end up carrying the financial can in Hunters Hill, not the government," **Ron Kaplan**

"I cannot be bought, bribed or silenced so back off Mr Baird, this is nothing but a flawed process to bully us into submission," **Aurelia Roman**

"These amalgamations are politically driven and it is my desire and my intent to keep the City of Ryde intact," Ryde RSL President **Bernie Cox**

"There will be economic booms and economic recessions and the government's future projections cannot be relied upon," **Robert Turnbull**

"The government knows well it has not got a mandate for this, it

"With a larger council there will be a lot less corruption, a lot of councillors treat small councils as their own personal fiefdom," **Rachel Thorpe**

"The qualities that make Lane Cove special are being threatened, our community spirit and our sense of place," **Dr Lynn McLaughlin**

"In 1922 my mother was born in a cottage not far from here. There are a large number of families who have long ago made Hunters Hill their home and no other local community has such a strong cohesion," **James Sanderson**

"The government says mega councils will repair the pot holes but just look at the way Roads and Maritime Services maintains its own local roads, this is what to expect from a mega council," **James Carney**

"It is ludicrous for you to come before us with this (forced merger) proposal, this proposal is a farce," Hunters Hill emeritus mayor **Ross Williams**

"The Liberal Party is intent of forcing this through. Some people say it is inevitable but I say People Power will stop it," **Phil Hart**

"What does Ryde mean for us in Lane Cove, it is just a place to drive through on the way to somewhere else. And we support the North Sydney Bears, not Wests Tigers!" **Terry Johns**

"Young people in Hunters Hill will use our com-



Charlotte Berry

bined vote to ensure that our next local State member has Hunters Hill at heart," **Charlotte Berry**

"The things that make Hunters Hill special need to be protected by councillors who represent our heritage values," **Helen Temple**

"Living is more than just cashing in. Lets not have municipal asset stripping in a (mega) council where development is the goal," **Alice Oppen**