

## BEREJKLIAN GOVT'S RENEWED ATTACK ON LOCAL DEMOCRACY OVER LOCAL PANELS

Save Our Councils Coalition (SOCC) calls upon the Berejiklian Government, and Planning Minister Roberts, to revoke the recent 'Local Planning Panels' Act mandating panels, and restore local decision-making on planning to our local councils.



*A section of the large crowd that attended the Rally for Local Democracy in Martin Place.*

Premier Gladys Berejiklian in her media conference on 27 July 2017 admitted that she and the Cabinet got it wrong and didn't listen to the community over forced council mergers. She said "Perhaps we should have listened earlier on in the process. Every single person who sat around the cabinet table needs to bear responsibility, including myself."

One of those Minister who got it hopelessly wrong was the Planning Minister Anthony Roberts. He didn't and wouldn't even listen to his own community of Hunters Hill who he is supposed to represent.

That community held a large public meeting on 23 February 2016. Speakers made it very clear that Roberts was not listening to their legitimate concerns. Their feelings can be readily seen and heard – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgPxiB8hDvw>

The NSW Government's attempt to destroy local councils across NSW, like Hunters Hill, was a direct attack on their local democracy including the right to elect their own councillors to make decisions involving planning and local developments.

The 'Local Planning Panels' legislation was rammed through the Parliament in the dead of night by Minister Roberts. The Act takes away totally the right of our elected

representatives – our councillors – to have any say or role in relation to local development applications.



*Premier Gladys Berejiklian*



*Minister for Planning Anthony Roberts MP*

Local Panels are dominated by non-elected officials from outside the area covered by the panel, and are appointed or vetted by the Minister. Communities and their elected councillors are for the first time being deleted from having a say on what is to be actually built in their areas.

This is a disgrace and a renewed attack upon our local democracy by an out of touch and arrogant State Government. The Minister and the Government are still not listening! One might ask - will they ever learn?

The Local Government Association (LGNSW) has called upon Minister Roberts to revoke this legislation mandating panels. Many communities and councils are in support of the Association's position, including Hunters Hill Council.

Save Our Councils Coalition calls upon the Berejiklian Government to withdraw this legislation and to do so NOW.

Government MPs including Roberts are in serious trouble if they fail again to heed the views of their own communities.

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