

# Council demand: show us the money

Mosman and North Sydney Councils still chasing merger victory costs



Mosman's Jacquie Tuck speaks at an anti-council merger rally a year ago.

**WHERE** is the money?  
That's what Mosman Council wants to know.

· **Andrea McCullagh**

It put up a fight against the State Government's plans to dissolve it into a mega council with neighbouring North Sydney and Willoughby.

Mosman spent about \$700,000 in its successful battle to stay independent. But the State coffers still haven't coughed up what it owes to the council.

"The government has not paid costs to council as resolved by the court and we continue to pursue the matter through our lawyers," a Mosman council spokeswoman said.

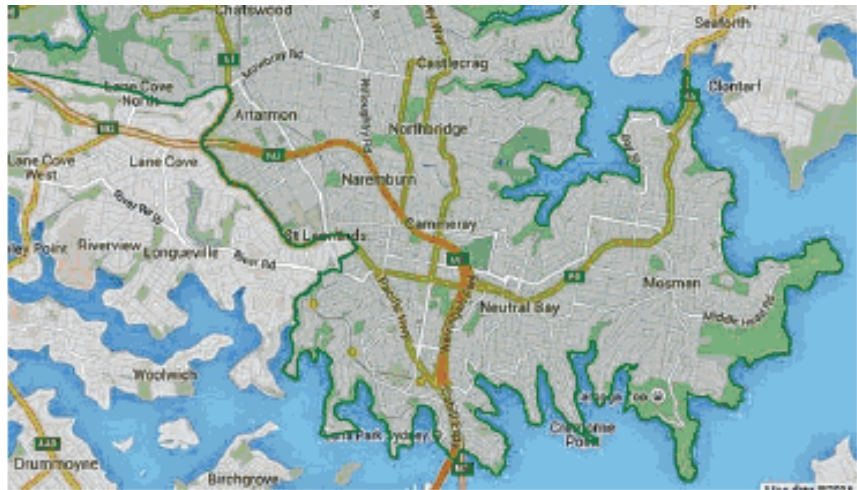
"We have not obtained a reason for the delay."

Mosman's view of the situation is that it is "unsatisfactory". But it explained that the matter is further complicated by the fact that council is also subject to costs in the loss of an appeal in the Court of Appeal.

"The court's judgment in the Land and Environment Court was costs were to be awarded to Mosman Council. The court's judgment in the Court of Appeal was costs awarded to the Crown," the Mosman spokeswoman said.

The council will return any funds back to its legal budget with any surplus to go back to general revenue.

Mosman Council can calculate its own costs but said it is unlikely to be reim-



How the merger would have changed the lower north shore.

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Mosman Council

bursed for all of them. It does not know what the crown's costs are.

North Sydney Council also hasn't been reimbursed for the legal battle but could not provide much information on the issue.

"The question of costs payable between the Council and the government remains unresolved," a council spokeswoman said.

When the issue is finalised

it will be reported to the council's legal and planning committee.

A number of councils were merged under the State Government drive.

Northern Beaches Council and Central Coast Council were among the newly-created local government bodies.

However, other councils were saved from being merged when the plan was abandoned last year by Premier Gladys Berejiklian.

A spokesman for Local Government Minister Gabrielle Upton said the parties continue to work through the relevant processes for determining the quantum of costs.

"Once agreed, the government hopes to resolve the matters as soon as possible," he said.