

**Submission
No 176**

INQUIRY INTO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Ms Yvonne Jayawardena

Date received: 8/07/2015

The Hon. Paul Green, M.L.C.,
Chairman,
Parliamentary Inquiry into Local
Government Reforms,
Parliament House,
Macquarie Street, Sydney, 2000

2nd July 2015

Dear Sir,

Proposed Merger between Kurring-gai Council and Hornsby Council

I wish to state my strong objection to the above merger for the following reasons:

1. the substantial increase in rates for Kurring-gai ratepayers due to the much higher land values in Kurring-gai compared to those in Hornsby. This may cause a great deal of hardship to some residents. Kurring-gai has a large number of older people, many of whom may not receive an old age pension but do not have a great deal of money. Younger people with a mortgage may also be affected.
2. the resulting decrease in local representation. Local government is the level of government which is the easiest for people to contact. There should be fairness in a democracy. What is fair with 6 councillors for Kurring-gai and 9 councillors for Hornsby on the merged Council? How often will the vote be simply 9 to 6 in matters pertaining to the Kurring-gai area??
3. a decrease in services. The current Kurring-gai Council offers many excellent services and has received a number of awards for such excellence.

In summary: this would hardly be a fair merger with all the advantages going to Hornsby and all the disadvantages for Kurring-gai.

I am also strongly opposed to forced council mergers. This was hardly an issue at the last State Election and there is no way that Premier Baird could claim a mandate for forced council mergers.

It is a well-known fact that Kurring-gai residents voted in large numbers for the Liberal Party. The state government should be aware of the fact that council mergers are said to be one of the factors resulting in the unexpected loss of the Liberals in Queensland.

Yours faithfully