

Michael Bullen
Delegate
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www.councilboundaryreview.nsw.gov.au

Good For Manly Association (“GFM”) welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Council Boundary Review process.

GFM is a not-for-profit, non-political group of residents passionate about keeping the Manly area unique. GFM is an incorporated Association, formed in January 2012 with the view to providing a forum for residents of the Manly local government area to have a more active voice in its community.

The objectives of Good For Manly are to:

1. Protect and promote the interests and welfare of all of the residents and ratepayers of the Municipality of Manly (“Manly”).
2. Encourage, nurture and develop a strong sense of community amongst the residents and ratepayers of Manly.
3. Nurture, preserve and enhance the historical village centre of Manly for the benefit of all Manly residents, ratepayers and visitors.
4. Protect, preserve and enhance the natural attributes, and the native flora and fauna, of Manly.
5. Promote and develop Manly’s national and international reputation as a world-class tourism destination.
6. Ensure that Manly Council and its staff operate in all respects in accordance with world’s best practice.
7. Encourage and support the election of suitable candidates to Manly Council, and monitor and support them, once elected, in the proper performance of their functions as councillors.

Good For Manly’s specific goals in regards to Manly Council are to make a positive change to the way Manly Council is run through it being;

1. A strong independent council.
2. An open, transparent and accountable administration.
3. Supportive of genuine public consultation on all major issues.
4. An advocate for a better vision for Manly.
5. Responsive to popular residents' issues.



GOOD
for **MANLY**

Incorporation No. INC9896558

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Council Amalgamation

GFM would prefer that no change be made to the existing boundaries of Manly Council and that Manly Council remain as it is currently defined.

However, given the well publicised stance of the NSW Government to council amalgamations it is apparent that there is an intention to amalgamate the Manly Council area with that of Mosman Council and half of Warringah Council into a new council area to be known as Greater Manly Council.

GFM is opposed to the formation of Greater Manly Council.

If it is inevitable that council amalgamations are to occur and that Manly Council is targeted as one council to be included in the amalgamations, GFM supports Manly Council being amalgamated with Warringah Council and Pittwater Council to form a single Northern Beaches Council.

Amalgamations are a serious change to the identity and function of a local government entity and its constituent communities. Mergers should only occur, therefore, when the council's residents support the merger and that support has been subject to serious quantitative assessment. There is no evidence that such an assessment has been undertaken within the Manly Council area or other councils on the northern beaches or in Mosman. GFM has a well supported website and various social media sites and has over 3000 unique visitors to those sites each week. GFM is confident that it genuinely represents its supporters in;

- Opposing the formation of a Greater Manly Council, and
- Should amalgamation be inevitable, supporting the formation of a Northern Beaches Council.

Rationale

GFM supports its position by submitting the following;

1. Warringah Council was named in 2015 as the best Council in NSW. It is considered illogical to disband the State's best Council when there is the opportunity to amalgamate its administration with the 2 Councils surrounding it.
2. The Northern Beaches, currently consisting of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Councils is one quite clearly defined geographic area.
3. Mosman is not geographically similar to or connected to Manly or Warringah other than by a very narrow spit of land and bridge.
4. The 3 current Northern Beaches Councils have similar ocean beach maintenance, beach/storm erosion and ocean beach cleanliness issues to manage which are not issues faced by Mosman.
5. The 3 current Northern Beaches Councils have real and emerging climate change/sea level rises to manage which should be addressed in concert as one Council. Manly Council has been the leading council in work on the ecology and environment of Sydney.



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6. The 3 current Northern Beaches Councils have a large influx of tourists/day travellers to manage throughout the year which is not an issue faced by Mosman. Manly has been for over a century and still is seen as “The Resort of Sydney” by residents of the greater Sydney metropolitan area.
7. The latest Australian Census clearly demonstrates the demographic differences over wide criteria between Mosman and the 3 current Northern Beaches Councils. These include relatively uniform income and wealth, lifestyle, recreational and environmental characteristics.
8. The Spit Bridge and the enforced narrowing of Spit Road at peak times will be impediments to the convenient and quick movement of Council service vehicles if Mosman was to be included in a Council area north of the Spit Bridge.
9. Local government is the level of government most closely connected to the community and is best positioned to identify and respond to community needs. It is an essential component of democracy. The Northern Beaches have been for decades a clearly defined broad community and should remain so.
10. Any changes to local government in NSW should strengthen, rather than weaken, the bonds and connections between local councils and residents.
11. A larger population and one Northern Beaches Council would deliver greater efficiencies, economies and purchasing power than the proposed two local government areas. It would be financially more efficient and viable for its ratepayers.
12. One Northern Beaches Council without Mosman would give more equitable and direct democratic representation at local government level; backed by a ward system and preserving existing LEPs and DCPs, most probably with some minor changes to remove inconsistencies. Once aligned, planning and DA processing should be easier and advisers such as town planners and architects will have fewer differing elements to manage.
13. Mosman residents have very little direct interest in a local representation dominated by Manly and the southern part of Warringah and the ratepayers of those areas do not want their representation diluted by Mosman representatives.
14. The use of ratepayers' funds would be more efficiently and equitably deployed. Council capital and recurrent spending would be more specifically targeted to the needs of a more uniform area than if Mosman were included. Delivering services to Mosman would be inefficient and costly.



15. Attitudes to real estate developments vary considerably across the Mosman and Northern Beaches area. Local Government of a Greater Manly area including Mosman, Manly and Southern Warringah would be incompatible with the interests of residents because it would struggle to differentiate strongly held preferences. (e.g. It is unlikely that residents in the current Mosman Council area would welcome any move towards having dense high rise developments such as those that are approved at present in the Warringah area of Dee Why in particular).
16. Several important government and other agencies already cover the whole northern beaches area without Mosman. They give community identity and cohesion which would be lost in the government's proposal. For example, surf lifesaving, police, education, Manly Warringah football and other sporting teams, environmental and coastal protection are organised and patronised by Northern Beaches residents.
17. Upon amalgamation, revenue will be raised through the sale proceeds of redundant surplus Council chambers. Efficiencies will be gained via the utilisation of assets that are currently duplicated and not fully used. (e.g. turf equipment for maintenance of playing fields and cricket pitches). Such gains should be returned for the benefit of those ratepayers who have funded them in the past – not to those who have not done so.



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