



PROTECT PITTWATER

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 22 November 2023



Simon Dunn (left) with Dr Amanda Cohn (centre) and members of the Demerge NSW Alliance, including Cr Miranda Korzy (right).

Protect Pittwater is delighted that the Local Government Amendment (De-amalgamation Plebiscites) Bill 2023 was tabled in NSW Parliament this morning (22 November 2023). Upper House Member, Dr Amanda Cohn, tabled the private member's Bill and referenced the plight of the Pittwater Community, together with 9 other disenfranchised NSW communities, in her passionate 2nd reading speech.

Dr Cohn noted the closure of the Avalon Customer Service Centre as just one example of the reduction in services to Pittwater Community and echoed the concerns of many Pittwater Residents in relation to local issues being ignored by the amalgamated council as well as the significant loss of representation for the Pittwater Community.

Protect Pittwater President, Simon Dunn, joined representatives of Demerge NSW Alliance (DNA) at NSW Parliament to welcome the tabling of the ground breaking legislation calling it "*the missing piece of the Local Government Act.*"

Mr Dunn noted that *“for the first time NSW communities have a potential pathway for binding plebiscites to be held instead of the next scheduled local government elections in September 2024 and thereby provide a mechanism for true local government to be restored.”* He said *“We express our sincere thanks to both Dr Cohn and to the Demerge NSW Alliance, in particular Brian Halstead for his tireless efforts to see this vital legislation finally tabled in Parliament.”*

Mr Dunn reiterated *“The people of Pittwater were overwhelming opposed to amalgamation of their successful Council and outraged that the decision to do so was made arbitrarily by the then Minister for Local Government. This bill promises to take back the power to restore a Council from the desk of one minister and place it squarely in the hands of local communities, where democratically it must reside.”*

Protect Pittwater remains hopeful that both major parties will support Dr Cohn’s push to restore local democracy, so that the precious natural environment of Pittwater can be protected for generations to come.

For further comment:

Protect Pittwater Media Officer – Trevor Harrison – M. 0418-442-288.

Link to Bill:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bill/files/18485/First%20Print.pdf>

Link to 2nd reading speech:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Hansard/Pages/HansardResult.aspx#/docid/'HANSARD-1820781676-94040'>