



# SAVE HUNTERS HILL MUNICIPALITY COALITION

*A Coalition of community and precinct groups and residents determined to save the historic Municipality of Hunters Hill*

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The Chief Executive,  
Ryde City Council,  
1 Devlin Street,  
RYDE NSW 2112

Dear Mr McMahon,

**Re: Ryde City Council Submission to the Minister for  
Local Government Concerning Hunter's Hill Boundaries.**

On 28<sup>th</sup> August 2003 a community coalition of residents, community groups and precinct groups within the local government area of Hunter's Hill was formed. The name 'Save Hunter's Hill Municipality Coalition' was adopted.

The Coalition has considered Ryde City Council's submission 'Request for Boundary Adjustment' that was forwarded to the Minister for Local Government on or about 23rd August 2003 so far as it relates to Hunter's Hill.

That submission, and its accompanying report, are seriously defective as follows:

1. The submission does not reveal nor comprehend the incredible community of interest and sense of belonging that exists right across the Municipality of Hunter's Hill. Partly as a result of its historic boundaries dating from 1861, and the long-standing community, cultural and sporting groups, there is a very strong identification with and commitment to the Municipality, its history and heritage by its residents.
  2. In relation to Gladesville, it has always been divided along the main ridgeline, now Victoria Road. Both Hunter's Hill and Ryde Councils have jointly funded studies and reports and at present are working on a joint master plan. The community wants this process to continue. Both Councils are committed to joint cooperation through NSROC on this and a range of other issues.
  3. The majority of facilities in the Gladesville shopping precinct, including the supermarket, banks, post office and car parking lie within the Municipality of Hunter's Hill. The library facility is partly funded by Hunter's Hill Council under a long-standing agreement.
  4. No where is it stated in the submission what the views are of the Hunter's Hill community. They were not consulted prior to your submission being made to the Minister for Local Government. Secret meetings of Ryde councillors were held. There was no input from or consultation with Ryde residents. At the Ryde City Council meeting those who requested to speak as residents of Hunter's Hill were refused. No where in the report or submission was it disclosed that in the referendum held at the local government elections in 1999, 80% of Hunter's Hill residents voted **NO** to amalgamation.
  5. The summation of Hunter's Hill in the submission is as follows... 'the Municipality of Hunter's Hill is generally characterised into two main parts; the historic peninsular and the
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remainder that has similar characteristics to the City of Ryde' (The peninsular is stated to be east of Burns Bay Road).

This statement shows an appalling lack of understanding of Hunter's Hill and its heritage. Contrary to the Ryde submission the Municipality of Hunter's Hill in its entirety is a peninsular. The earliest parts settled were the Figtree and Gladesville areas. Much of its heritage including domestic dwellings and religious, educational and health institutions lie within that part of the Municipality.

It is clear from the above that the Ryde City councillors were not given accurate information about the Hunter's Hill Municipality. Indeed the information given was misleading and inaccurate, with relevant material withheld. The decision reached by seven of the 11 councillors present was flawed.

Ryde City Councillors are now informed of the accurate position. In addition, it is now abundantly clear to all that the Hunter's Hill community, including all parts of it, do not want to be included in Ryde. They want their historic Municipality, which is of national heritage significance, to continue with its present boundaries.

On 17th September 2003 the largest public meeting ever held in the Hunter's Hill Town Hall (1866) passed the following unanimous resolution:

**“That this public meeting called by the Hunter's Hill community totally rejects the two Ryde City Council boundary proposals that would result in the extinction of our local government area; and affirms its overwhelming support for the retention of our historic boundaries.”**

It is not only the Hunter's Hill community that rejects the Ryde City Council's submission to the Minister. So does every councillor on Hunter's Hill Council, including its two Labor councillors. Four of the Ryde City councillors did not support it, including the two Labor councillors. The Prime Minister The Hon. John Howard supports the retention of Hunter's Hill's existing historic boundaries. The State member for Ryde, The Hon. John Watkins, the State member for Lane Cove, Anthony Roberts, and the Federal member for North Sydney, The Hon. Joe Hockey are all opposed. The Lane Cove, Parramatta and Hornsby Councils are opposed. The National Trust and the Hunter's Hill Trust strongly support Hunter's Hill Municipality and its boundaries. Persons with a record in environmental activism including Jack Munday are also strongly opposed.

In our view there is only one responsible and appropriate course open to Ryde City Council. It should acknowledge that its decision was based on unsound information. Given the information now available to it from many sources, it should withdraw its submission to the Minister so far as it relates to the Hunter's Hill Municipality.

As you would appreciate our Coalition is totally open and transparent. This letter to you there for is a public letter and document. Copies of it will be sent to all councillors of Ryde City and Hunter's Hill Councils, to the Minister for Local Government, to The Upper House General Purpose Standing Committee Number 5, to the local members for Ryde and Lane Cove, and be placed on our web site [www.savehuntershill.com](http://www.savehuntershill.com)

We wish to inform you that the Coalition has made submissions to the Minister for Local Government and to the Upper House Inquiry.

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We seek an urgent response to this letter and the withdrawal of your submission. We do so because of its gross inadequacies and the anger and distress caused not only to the residents of the Hunter's Hill Municipality but to the wider community in light of the Municipality's national significance.

Yours faithfully,

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16<sup>th</sup> October 2003

