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Submission: As a Leichhardt Municipality resident for almost 40 years, I absolutely oppose merger of Leichhardt Council with any other Council. Indeed, I do NOT agree with the proposed amalgamation of Councils to create much larger Municipalities. In today's society, individuals, residents, citizens are seeing any opportunity or chance to have their voices / concerns / issues heard and or addressed lost at an alarmingly fast rate. As Councils now stand, an individual can actually physically drop into Council offices and have their concerns / issues / problems addressed face to face and in person. Councilors can actually directly interact with their constituents. And people have a good chance of being heard. Importantly, money raised from ratepayers is most likely going to be spend within their LOCAL area.

Amalgamation will make residents and their local concerns / issues etc much less visible, will render us faceless. With another million people about to be piled onto already congested Sydney suburbs - only ones happy about this are the developers, no matter how much those in power are telling us at every opportunity that this is 'good for us' - who is going to have the time to travel across 6 suburbs to go to Council chambers to discuss their matters in person? Besides which, bureaucrats are probably already planning to cut Council staffing levels and have us hanging at the end of a phone to a call center or spending even more frustrating hours writing endless e-mails that will go unanswered or receive stock standard meaningless, empty responses. Smaller Councils have a better chance of becoming aware, of understanding and of addressing issues affecting their local constituents.

So, to re-iterate, I oppose Council amalgamation in general, and in particular I STRONGLY SUPPORT Leichhardt Council as a STAND ALONE Council. Hands OFF please!

Xenia Iona