



Central Coast Friends of Democracy

On 12 May 2016, the NSW government amalgamated Gosford and Wyong Councils to become Central Coast Council. Five years later rates are going up, staff have been axed, community assets are being sold, services cut and there is a public inquiry into Central Coast Council. **Our Council is broken and our local democracy is under threat.**

Tell us what you think: Should Central Coast Council demerge or stay as it is?

A snapshot of some of the pluses and minuses (Read the longer list on our website & take our survey)

	Demerger – Reinstate former Gosford and Wyong Councils	Stay merged as Central Coast Council
Why?	<p>The community has lost representation</p> <p>Our communities and geography are diverse - it should not be a "one size fits all" approach.</p> <p>Merger has failed to deliver benefits forecast by NSW government</p>	<p>Complacency - too much trouble to demerge</p> <p>Unknown cost of demerging</p>
Pluses	<p>Breaks 1 big problem into 2 smaller problems</p> <p>Improves ratio of elected representative to community (previously approx. 1 Councillor : 16,500 residents)</p> <p>Reduces workload so Councillors can be more effective</p> <p>Puts the "local" back into local government - allows for local needs to be better recognised—better control of planning and rates to suit local needs</p> <p>More chance of collaboration for smaller Councils to work with 2 State MPs and 1 Federal MP</p>	<p>Process is already underway – State government / Administrator pushing through, systems are being combined and harmonised</p> <p>Moves CC Council towards a model of "Board of Directors" and corporate entity</p> <p>Argued that it is an opportunity for Council to operate as an advocate for the region as a whole – with one voice</p>
Minuses	<p>Cost of demerger - unknown but not \$0 – (this can be offset by having a Joint Organisation and shared services, including for Water & Sewer)</p> <p>More change for staff and community</p> <p>Need to divide staff, assets and debt that is owing</p>	<p>Loss of community voice – ratio of Councillors to residents will be 1:36,000 ... (with 9 Councillors and forecast population growth will be 1:46,000 by 2035)</p> <p>Loss of local identity / local community voice – more a "one size fits all" approach</p> <p>Toxic politics looms large – Council is a football with pressure from 5 State MPs and 2 Federal MPs</p>

How does a Council demerge?

A demerger happens through a review of Council boundaries and the formation of a new Council area.

A proposal (to demerge) may be made by the Minister for Local Government or by a council affected by the proposal or by at least 10% of enrolled voters.

The process includes a review by the Boundaries Commission and a Public Hearing before the Minister makes a decision.

Who pays for a demerger?

In May 2021, the rules were changed. If a Council submits a proposal and the Minister agrees to demerge, then the NSW government pays for the cost of the demerger. **CCFoD believes that this should apply to any decision to demerge.**

What can you do?

1 **Take our survey** - Should the Council demerge (Yes / No) and your reasons:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CCC_merger_or_demerger

2 **If you think there should be a demerger** - then complete the petition overleaf and send to CCFoD

PROPOSAL TO DE-MERGE CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL AND REINSTATE THE FORMER GOSFORD AND WYONG COUNCIL BOUNDARIES

I am an enrolled elector of Central Coast Council Local Government Area.

I support the proposal under Sections 215 and 218E(2) of the Local Government Act 1993 to alter the boundaries of Central Coast Council and to recreate the former Gosford and Wyong Councils with the boundaries applicable as at 11 May 2016.

I support this proposal to the NSW Local Government Minister because:

- the amalgamation of Gosford and Wyong Councils was undemocratic and unwanted by the local communities
- each former Council provided essential local representation and environmental protections for its residents
- the social, geographic and economic history of the two constituent Councils made an inappropriate fit in the merged council.
- a majority of the residents of both former Councils opposed the merger. Residents did not want the merger then and do not want the merger now.

Please provide details as they appear on the electoral roll:

Given Names: _____

Family or Surname: _____

Street Address: _____

Suburb: _____

Postcode: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Send your petition to: Central Coast Friends of Democracy – PO Box 106, Terrigal 2260