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| Special Variation Application Form – Part BCouncil application for 2015/16 |
| Insert Name of Council: Marrickville CouncilDate Submitted to IPART: 18 February 2015Council Contact Person: Steve KludassCouncil Contact Phone: (02) 9335 2020Council Contact Email: steve.kludass@marrickville.nsw.gov.au |

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ISBN

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# Introduction

IPART will assess each application against the criteria set out in the Office of Local Government’s (OLG) *Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a special variation to general income for 2015/2016* (the Guidelines). Councils should refer to these guidelines before completing this application form.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Each council must complete this Part B application form when applying for a special variation to general income either under section 508A or under section 508(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

The Part B form must be completed together with the Part A (spreadsheet) form for both s508(2) and s508A applications. The Guidelines also require the council to have resolved to apply for a special variation. You must attach a copy of the council’s resolution to make a special variation application. IPART’s assessment of the application cannot commence without it.

## Completing the application form

This form is structured to provide guidance on the information we consider necessary to assess a special variation application. To complete the form, the council will need to respond to questions and insert text in the boxed area following each section or sub-section.

The amount of information that a council provides will be a matter of judgement for the council, but it should be sufficient for us to make an evidence-based assessment of the application. Generally, the extent of the evidence should reflect the size of the variation sought. More complex applications or requests for a high cumulative percentage increase should be supported by stronger, more extensive evidence.

Councils may submit additional supporting documents as attachments to the application (refer to section 8). These should be clearly identified in Part B and cross-referenced. We prefer to receive relevant extracts rather than complete publications, unless the complete publication is relevant to the criteria. You should provide details of how we can access the complete publication should this be necessary.

We publish Fact Sheets on how IPART assesses special variations and on the nature of community engagement for special variation applications. These will assist in preparing the application. The latest Fact Sheets on these topics are dated October 2014 and are available on IPART’s website.[[2]](#footnote-2)

We may ask for additional information to assist us in making our assessment. If this is necessary, we will contact the nominated council officer.

This application form consists of:

* Section 2 – Preliminaries
* Section 3 – Assessment criterion 1
* Section 4 – Assessment criterion 2
* Section 5 – Assessment criterion 3
* Section 6 – Assessment criterion 4
* Section 7 – Assessment criterion 5
* Section 8 – List of attachments
* Section 9 – Certification.

## Using the Council Portal to submit the application

All councils intending to apply for a special variation must use the Council Portal on IPART’s website to register as an applicant council and to submit an application.

The Portal is at <http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local_Govt>. The [User Guide](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/files/948b8fb1-2e6e-4647-b9d3-a10000a2552a/Local_Government_-_Council_Portal_User_Guide_-_November_2012.pdf) for the Portal will assist you with the registration and online submission process. If you experience difficulties please contact Himali Ranasinghe on (02) 9113 7710 or by email himali\_ranasinghe@ipart.nsw.gov.au

Councils intending to submit an application under either section 508(2) or section 508A must notify us of their intention to apply by **COB Friday, 12 December 2014.**

Councils should submit their applications via the Portal. File size limits apply to each part of the application. For Part B the limit is 10MB. The limit for supporting documents is 70MB for public documents and 50MB for confidential documents. These file limits should be sufficient for your application. Please contact us if they are not. We ask that councils also submit one hard copy of their application to us (with a table of contents and appropriate cross referencing of attachments). Note, early in 2015 IPART will be relocating to the following address:

Local Government Team
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
PO Box K35,
Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1230

We must receive your application via the Council Portal no later than **COB Monday, 16 February 2015.**

We will post all applications (excluding confidential content) on the IPART website. Confidential content may include part of a document that discloses the personal identity or other personal information pertaining to a member of the public or whole documents such as a council working document and/or a document that includes commercial-in-confidence content. Councils should ensure that documents provided to IPART do not expose confidential content.

Councils should also post their application on their own website for the community to access.

# Preliminaries

## Focus on Integrated Planning and Reporting

Councils must identify the need for a special variation to their General Fund’s rates revenue as part of their Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) process.[[3]](#footnote-3) The IP&R documents will need to be publicly exhibited and adopted by the council prior to it submitting its application to us. Also refer to section 6 for a more detailed explanation.

The key IP&R documents are the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and, where applicable, the Asset Management Plan. A council’s application may also include supplementary and/or background publications used within its IP&R processes. You should refer to these documents to support your application for a special variation where appropriate.

## Key purpose of special variation

At the highest level, indicate the key purpose(s) of the special variation by marking one or more of the boxes below with an “x”.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Maintain existing services | [ ]  |
| Enhance financial sustainability | [ ]  |
| Environmental services or works | [ ]  |
| Infrastructure maintenance / renewal | X |
| Reduce infrastructure backlogs | X |
| New infrastructure investment | [ ]  |
| Other (specify) | [ ]  |

You should summarise below the key aspects of the council’s application, including the purpose and the steps undertaken in reaching a decision to make an application.

Like most Councils in NSW, Marrickville has an infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall. The extent of this shortfall is clearly articulated in its suite of Integrated Planning and Reporting documents, particularly the Resource Strategy, Delivery Program, Asset Management Plans and Long Term Financial Plan.

As at 30 June 2014, Council reported an infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall of approximately **$5.065m per annum** as part of its annual financial statements.

In June 2014, Council resolved to form a Citizens Jury (known as the Marrickville Infrastructure Jury) to essentially determine an appropriate level of service for existing infrastructure assets and to prioritise new capital projects. A key component of the Jury’s remit was to present possible revenue raising / expenditure saving options to finance any recommendations put forward.

The Jury, in its final report presented to Council on 25 November 2014, made a number of recommendations. One of the most significant recommendations was for Council to adopt new service levels for its network of existing infrastructure assets. This had the effect of reducing Council’s annual funding shortfall for infrastructure asset renewal from $5.065m to **$2.35m per annum.**

Despite its best endeavours, the Jury did not have time to exhaustively explore legitimate funding sources for its new service levels, though it did make it clear they did want to see Council identify productivity gains and additional parking related revenue opportunities before seeking to raise revenue from rates.

On 2 December 2014, Council resolved to develop a Productivity Improvement Plan (in accordance with one of the recommendations of the Jury) valued at $1m per annum and proceed to publicly exhibit a possible Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 3% (permanent) over and above IPART’s 2.4% determination – **known as Scenario 2 in Council’s suite of IP&R Documents. The total increase from 1 July 2015 would therefore be a 5.4% rate increase.**

Council’s decision to proceed with a SRV was purely to keep that funding option ‘alive’ and seek broader public opinion on the proposal.

**The $1m Productivity Improvement Plan, together with the additional $1.35m the 3% SRV would generate, enabled Council to raise the necessary $2.35m per annum required to address Council’s new infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall, as determined by the Jury.**

Council’s community consultation in relation to the proposed SRV ran from Friday 5 December 2014 to Friday 6 February 2015 (inclusive). Council took into consideration the Christmas break in extending the consultation period from 1 month to 2 months. Council also took into consideration the fact that the Jury was a statistically valid cross-section of the community who had been intimately engaged in the process since September 2014.

Council received a total of 1,801 responses, of which 1,506 were postal submissions and 295 were on-line submissions. Results from the survey submissions indicate that **55% of all respondents were at least “somewhat supportive”** of the proposed rate increase versus 45% who were opposed.

Council commissioned independent market research company Micromex to undertake a statistically valid and demographically representative telephone survey of the Marrickville community (n=410).

Council did so because self-selecting responses (ie. the online and written submissions outlined above), while an important gauge of individual community members’ passion and interest, cannot be extrapolated to represent the views of the wider community. Results from the telephone survey indicate that **81% of all respondents were at least “somewhat supportive”** of the proposed rate increase versus 19% who were opposed.

Council received 2 petitions containing the names, addresses and signatures of 1,904 people. One of the petitions was initiated by the Marrickville Chamber of Commerce. Council is unable to determine the origins of the other petition.

The MIJ reconvened on Saturday 7 February to review the progress Council had made against the recommendations and to further consider how to pay for renewal of existing infrastructure assets as well as new unfunded assets. The independently facilitated Workshop was an opportunity for Council officers to respond to the recommendations the MIJ made in its report to Council on 25 November 2014.

Specifically, it was an opportunity to discuss alternate revenue raising strategies and ideas to fund both existing assets and new capital projects. It was also an opportunity to provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of the complexities of car parking management and enforcement strategies adopted by Council throughout the LGA.

At the close of the Workshop Council received a written statement from the Jury stating it was **willing to support the proposed rate increase** subject to Council increasing its parking enforcement activities throughout the LGA.

On 17 February 2015, Council resolved to proceed to make formal application to IPART for the proposed SRV.

It is worth reflecting on the value the Jury brought to the whole process. Council’s experience is such that we firmly believe there are fewer better ways for the community to be intimately involved in tackling complex local government issues than through a Deliberative Democracy process.

## Capital expenditure review

You should complete this section if council is undertaking major capital projects that are required to comply with the OLG’s Capital Expenditure Guidelines, as outlined in OLG Circular 10-34. A capital expenditure review is required for projects that are not exempt and cost in excess of 10% of council’s annual ordinary rates revenue or $1 million (GST exclusive), whichever is the greater.

A capital expenditure review is a necessary part of a council’s capital budgeting process and should have been undertaken as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements in the preparation of the Community Strategic Plan and Resourcing Strategy.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Does the proposed special variation require council to do a capital expenditure review in accordance with OLG Circular to Councils, Circular No 10-34 dated 20 December 2010 | Yes [ ]  | No X |
| If *Yes*, has a review been done and submitted to OLG? | N/A | N/A |

# Assessment Criterion 1: Need for the variation

Criterion 1 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The need for and purpose of a different revenue path for the council’s General Fund (as requested through the special variation) is clearly articulated and identified in the council’s IP&R documents, including its Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan where appropriate. In establishing need for the special variation, the relevant IP&R documents should canvass alternatives to the rate rise. In demonstrating this need councils must indicate the financial impact in their Long Term Financial Plan applying the following two scenarios:*

* *Baseline scenario – General Fund revenue and expenditure forecasts which reflect the business as usual model, and exclude the special variation, and*
* *Special variation scenario – the result of approving the special variation in full is shown and reflected in the General Fund revenue forecast with the additional expenditure levels intended to be funded by the special variation.*

*Evidence to establish this criterion could include evidence of community need /desire for service levels/projects and limited council resourcing alternatives.*

*Evidence could also include the assessment of the council’s financial sustainability conducted by the NSW Treasury Corporation.*

The response to this criterion should summarise the council’s case for the proposed special variation. It is necessary to show how the council has identified and considered its community’s needs, alternative funding options (to a rates rise) and the assessment of its financial sustainability as conducted by the NSW Treasury Corporation (TCorp).

The criterion states that the need for the special variation must be identified and clearly articulated in the council’s IP&R documents especially the Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and the Delivery Program, and, where appropriate, the Asset Management Plan (AMP). The purpose of the special variation should also be consistent with the priorities of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

## Case for special variation - community need

Summarise and explain below:

* How the council identified and considered the community’s needs and desires in relation to matters such as levels of service delivery and asset maintenance and provision.
* How the decision to seek higher revenues above the rate peg was made and which other options were examined, such as changing expenditure priorities or using alternative modes of service delivery.
* Why the special variation is the most appropriate option. For example, typically other options would include introducing new or higher user charges and/or an increase in council loan borrowings, or private public partnerships or joint ventures.
* How the proposed special variation impacts the LTFP forecasts and how this relates to the need the council identified. Our assessment will also consider the assumptions which underpin the council’s LTFP forecasts.

In addressing this criterion, you should include extracts from, or references to, the IP&R document(s) that demonstrate how the council meets this criterion.

Council has known for some time it has an infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall. Despite the use of sound asset management practices and assumptions which are underpinned by nationally recognised principles and methodologies and supported by bodies such as IPWEA, Marrickville has an infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall issue. We simply do not have sufficient finances to close the annual asset renewal funding gap.

Whilst our systems and processes were considered sound, our service levels had not been tested against those shared by the general community. Enter the Marrickville Infrastructure Jury. Part of the Jury’s remit was to determine a desirable level of service for Council’s existing network of infrastructure assets and develop funding options for same.

The Jury was given relevant information to assist them in arriving at a determination. In addition to the technical engineering data and information they needed to analyse, the Jury was also given risk management and financial management advice, as well as a snapshot of the 2014 Community Satisfaction Survey results. Not surprisingly, the Satisfaction Survey highlighted a performance gap in the community’s satisfaction with local infrastructure assets, particularly local roads and footpaths.

The Jury was also given access to Council’s suite of IP&R documents, financial health indicators and the rating scenarios Council had modelled in its Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plans.

For the Jury, the need for additional funding to eliminate the infrastructure asset renewal funding shortfall was obvious. Importantly, the Jury themselves acknowledged that additional funding for infrastructure asset renewal was critical to Council’s long term financial sustainability.

The Jury spent considerable time examining Council’s documents, particularly the Resource Strategy (that underpins the Community Strategic Plan), the Long Term Financial Plan and the Asset Management Plans.

The Jury satisfied themselves there was sufficient evidence in Council’s documents to support the ‘need’ for additional funding. It was then left to the Jury to determine ‘how’ they would finance that need.

In terms of financing the need, a whole range of options were put on the table. Productivity improvements, increased parking related revenue, increased loan borrowings and differential user fees and charges were all examined by the Jury.

In the end, the Jury settled on a mix of productivity improvements and a modest 3% additional rate increase as a way of funding the annual infrastructure asset renewal shortfall and recommending that Council continue to explore parking related revenue to fund new priority capital works in the future.

In arriving at a decision to increase rates by an additional 3%, the Jury accepted that it is a ‘guaranteed’ source of revenue equitably distributed across all ratepayers as opposed to ‘speculative’ revenue that may or may not eventuate, as was the case with parking related revenue at this point in time.

**Reference Information:**

**Resource Strategy (Appendix 01)**

The 3 Resourcing Scenarios (page 4)

Proposed SRV Information (pages 5-8)

Community Survey Results (page 25)

Infrastructure Asset Renewal Funding Shortfall (pages 26-27)

**Delivery Program (Appendix 02)**

## Financial sustainability

The special variation may be intended to improve the council’s underlying financial position, or to fund specific projects or programs of expenditure, or a combination of the two. We will consider evidence about the council’s current and future financial sustainability and the assumptions it has made in coming to a view on its financial sustainability.

You should explain below:

* The council’s understanding of its current state of financial sustainability, its long-term projections based on alternative scenarios and assumptions about revenue and expenditure.
* Any external assessment of the council’s financial sustainability, eg, by auditors or TCorp. Indicate how such assessments of the council’s financial sustainability is relevant to supporting the decision to apply for a special variation.
* The council’s view of the impact of the special variation on its financial sustainability.

Marrickville Council has a proud record of sound financial management. To some extent, this is evidenced by the fact that it has only ever sought a special rate variation to fund the construction of two major aquatic centres. Living within its means has served the community well for many years.

Marrickville recognises that whilst prudent financial management goes a long way, it can only go so far if one of its goals is to be financially sustainable longer term.

Council recently earned significant praise from its community (via the 2014 Community Satisfaction Survey) in relation to the services it offers and the satisfaction with which they are received.

95% of all respondents stated they were at least somewhat satisfied with Council’s services. According to Micromex (an independent research and survey firm who conducted the survey), this result is the highest of any Council on record.

In recent years, budgets have become increasingly difficult to balance. The cost of services in some areas far outstrips overall revenue projections. The State Government’s decision to freeze Financial Assistance Grants is but one of the many realities Council faces. Increasingly, there is pressure to reduce services (and levels) or eliminate them altogether.

Council’s Long Term Financial Plan clearly outlines its Global Variables and Assumptions. These variables and assumptions are a combination of local knowledge and understanding, publicly disclosed facts and forecast data provided by economists such as BIS Schrapnel.

TCorp’s financial assessment of Marrickville indicated it had a MODERATE financial sustainability rating and a NEUTRAL financial outlook. A full copy of the report is attached to this application.

Council currently reports an operating deficit before capital contributions and has done so for a number of years now. Whilst most of its financial health indicators are sound and have been trending in a positive manner, it is acknowledged there is room for improvement in the area of infrastructure asset renewal.

Council is currently participating in the State Government’s Fit for the Future Program. At present, using the Government’s asset management and financial sustainability indicators/benchmarks, we are not sustainable. However, if this SRV Application were to be approved, Marrickville would move to a far more sustainable position in a relatively short period of time.

In fact, the combination of $1m in expenditure savings per annum (via the Productivity Improvement Plan) and the additional rate revenue of $1.35m per annum, coupled with the investment of $2.35m in infrastructure asset renewal per annum would be sufficient to make Council financially sustainable using the Fit for Future criteria established by the State Government.

**Reference Information:**

**Long Term Financial Plan (Appendix 03)**

Global Variables & Assumptions (pages 9-20)

Scenario 1 – Infrastructure Renewal & Priority New Capital Projects (pages 21-27)

Scenario 2 – Infrastructure Renewal Only (pages 33-36)

Scenario 3 – Business as Usual (pages 42-43)

**TCorp Financial Assessment of Marrickville Council (Appendix 04)**

**Community Satisfaction Survey (Appendix 05)**

## Financial indicators

How will the special variation affect the council’s key financial indicators (General Fund) over the 10-year planning period? Please provide an analysis of council’s performance based on key indicators (current and forecast) which may include:

* Operating balance ratio excluding capital items (ie, net operating result before capital grants and contributions as percentage of operating revenue before capital grants and contributions).
* Unrestricted current ratio (the unrestricted current assets divided by unrestricted current liabilities).
* Rates and annual charges ratio (rates and annual charges divided by operating revenue).
* Debt service ratio (principal and interest debt service costs divided by operating revenue excluding capital grants and contributions).
* Broad liabilities ratio (total debt plus cost to clear infrastructure backlogs as per Special Schedule 7 divided by operating revenue).
* Asset renewal ratio (asset renewals expenditure divided by depreciation, amortisation and impairment expenses).

As previously mentioned, Council has assessed the effects of the proposed SRV against the financial sustainability indicators and benchmarks the State Government set in its Fit for the Future Program.

The combination of $1m in expenditure savings per annum (Productivity Improvement Plan) and the additional rate revenue of $1.35m per annum would be sufficient to make Council financially sustainable using the Fit for Future criteria established by the State Government.

In terms of the financial indicators outlined above, please find below an assessment of each indicator BEFORE and AFTER the proposed SRV.

**1. Operating Balance Ratio (excluding Capital Items)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SRV | NO SRV |
| 2015/16 | (3.28%) Deficit | (3.28%) Deficit |
| 2020/21 | 2.22% Surplus | (0.26%) Deficit |
| 2024/25 | 3.77% Surplus | 1.25% Surplus |

**2. Unrestricted Current Ratio**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SRV | NO SRV |
| 2015/16 | 1.30 | 1.42 |
| 2020/21 | 1.16 | 1.19 |
| 2024/25 | 1.14 | 1.11 |

**3. Rates and Annual Charges Ratio**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SRV | NO SRV |
| 2015/16 | 73.31% | 73.31% |
| 2020/21 | 74.94% | 74.50% |
| 2024/25 | 75.66% | 74.99% |

**4. Debt Service Ratio**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | SRV | NO SRV |
| 2015/16 | 4.98% | 4.98% |
| 2020/21 | 1.01% | 1.01% |
| 2024/25 | 0.00% | 0.00% |

**5. Asset Renewal Ratio**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | SRV | NO SRV |  |  |  |
| 2015/16 | 65.01% | 65.01% |  |  |  |
| 2020/21 | 97.40% | 61.05% |  |  |  |
| 2024/25 | 109.62% | 66.84% |  |  |  |

As can be seen, the combination of the proposed Productivity Improvement Plan, additional rate revenue, and investment in Council’s existing infrastructure Asset Renewal Program significantly improves Council’s performance in areas such as the Operating Balance Ratio and the Asset Renewal Ratio.

## Contribution plan costs above the cap

You should complete this section if the special variation seeks funding for contributions plan costs above the development contributions cap. Otherwise, leave this section blank.

Please explain how the council has established the need for a special variation to meet the shortfall in development contributions.

For costs above the cap in contributions plans, a council must provide:[[4]](#footnote-4)

* a copy of the council’s section 94 contributions plan
* a copy of the Minister for Planning’s response to IPART’s review and details of how the council has subsequently amended the contributions plan
* details of any other funding sources that the council is proposing to use
* any reference to the proposed contributions (which were previously to be funded by developers) in the council’s planning documents (eg, LTFP and Asset Management Plan (AMP).

|  |
| --- |
| Council’s SRV Application is NOT seeking funding for Contribution Plan costs above the Developer Contributions cap. |

# Assessment criterion 2: Community awareness and engagement

Criterion 2 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*Evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent of a rate rise. The IP&R documentation should clearly set out the extent of the General Fund rate rise under the special variation. The council’s community engagement strategy for the special variation must demonstrate an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure an opportunity for community awareness and input to occur.*

In responding to this criterion, the council must provide evidence that:

* it has consulted and engaged the community about the special variation using a variety of engagement methods and that the community is aware of the need for, and extent of, the requested rate increases
* it provided opportunities for input and gathered input/feedback from the community about the proposal
* the IP&R documents clearly set out the extent of the requested rate increases.

In assessing the evidence, we will consider how transparent the engagement with the community has been, especially in relation to explaining:

* the proposed cumulative special variation rate increases including the rate peg for each rating category (in both percentage and dollar terms)
* the annual increase in rates that will result if the special variation is approved in full (and not just the increase in daily or weekly terms)
* the size and impact of any expiring special variation (see Box 4.1 below for further detail)
* the rate levels that would apply without the special variation
* proposed increases in any other council charges (eg, waste management, water and sewer), especially if these are likely to exceed the increase in the CPI.

More information about how the council may engage the community is to be found in the OLG *Guidelines*, the IP&R manual, and IPART’s Fact Sheet *Community Awareness and Engagement for special variation applications*, October 2014.

|  |
| --- |
| Box 4.1 Where a council is renewing or replacing an expiring special variation |
| The council’s application should show how you have explained to its community:There is a special variation due to expire at the end of the current financial year or during the period covered by the proposed special variation. This needs to include when the expiring special variation was originally approved, for what purpose and the percentage of (General Fund) general income originally approved.The corresponding percentage of general income that the expiring special variation represents for the relevant year.Whether the temporary expiring special variation is being replaced with another temporary or a permanent increase to the rate base.The percentage value of any additional variation amount, above the rate peg, for which the council is applying for through a special variation.If the proposed special variation was not approved ie, only the rate peg applies, the year-on-year change in rates would be lower, or that rates may fall.The council also must attach, to its application to IPART, a copy of the Instrument of Approval that has been signed by the Minister or IPART Chairman. |
|  |

## The consultation strategy

The council is required to provide details of the consultation strategy undertaken, including the range of methods used to inform and engage with the community about the proposed special variation and to obtain community input and feedback. The engagement activities could include media releases, mail outs, focus groups, statistically valid random or opt-in surveys, online discussions, public meetings, newspaper advertisements and public exhibition of documents.

The council is to provide relevant extracts of the IP&R documents that explain the proposed rate rises under the special variation and attach relevant samples of the council’s consultation material.

Council developed a Community Consultation Plan and undertook a variety of activities to engage the community on the proposed SRV.

The Marrickville Infrastructure Jury was at the heart of the Community Consultation Plan. A statistically valid cross section of 30 individuals who live in the Marrickville LGA invested over 40 hours of their time to determine what they considered a desirable level of service for our existing infrastructure asset network. Furthermore, they explored a variety of funding options to fund their desired service level.

Following Council’s resolution to proceed to community consultation, council officers put in place a number of systems and processes to inform and engage the broader community. These included:

1. Public Exhibition of amended IP&R documentation that outlined the extent of and need for an SRV including information on the MIJ process

2. All public exhibition material being made available to the community online and in locations throughout the LGA, and promoted via:

 a. A dedicated ‘Your Say Marrickville’ project page that included a Q&A tool and a submission form

 b. Council’s website

 c. Brochure – letterbox drop to all households and businesses in the LGA (35,000)

 d. Community Information Session at Council’s Administration Centre on 28 January 2014.

 e. Displays at Council’s Administration Centre and Marrickville, Stanmore, Dulwich Hill and St Peters Libraries

 f. Posters and flyers at Council facilities including Childcare Centres, Aquatic Centres, Recreation Centres

 g. Posters and flyers distributed through Council’s Magic Yellow Bus service targeting families throughout the LGA

 h. Notification to all of Council’s Advisory Committees and Reference groups

 i. Mail-out Brochure to all ratepayers as part of the February Rates Instalment Notice (sent mid-January 2015)

 j. Information stall at Council’s Australia Day event in Enmore Park (26 January 2015)

 k. Media releases

 l. Social media including Facebook and Twitter

 m. Council’s e-newsletters

 n. Advertising in local newspapers and multicultural press covering Marrickville’s five major community languages: Vietnamese, Greek, Arabic, Chinese and Portuguese.

 o. Community submissions were accepted on line through Your Say at Marrickville, by returning the survey questionnaire contained within the Brochure, in writing to Council, or in person at Customer Service.

In addition to the above, Council also commissioned Micromex to conduct a phone poll of 410 Marrickville residents to ascertain what level of support there might be for the proposed SRV.

**Reference Information:**

**Marrickville Infrastructure Jury – links to Videos**

<http://youtu.be/iMengew0TXk>

<http://youtu.be/TGakUpxyl9Y>

**Community Engagement Plan & Submissions (Appendix 06)**

## Feedback from the community consultations

Summarise the outcomes and feedback from the council’s community engagement activities. Outcomes could include the number of attendees at events and participants in online forums, as well as evidence of media reports and other indicators of public awareness of the council’s special variation intentions. Where applicable, provide evidence of responses to surveys, particularly the level of support for specific programs or projects, levels and types of services, investment in assets, as well as the options proposed for funding them by rate increases.

Where the council has received submissions from the community relevant to the special variation, the application should set out the views expressed in those submissions. Please refer to Section 1.2 concerning how the council should handle confidential content in feedback received from the community. The council should also identify and document any action that it has taken, or will take, to address issues of common concern within the community.

**Submissions to Council**

Council received a total of 1,801 responses, of which 1,506 were postal submissions and 295 were on-line submissions. A summary of the primary questions and responses is outlined below:

Question 1 – How supportive are you of a SRV of 3% above the rate peg to renew essential infrastructure?

**Results from the survey submissions indicate that 55% of all respondents are at least “somewhat supportive” of the proposed rate increase versus 45% who are opposed.**

Question 2 – Which do you prefer – a SRV to renew infrastructure or NO SRV, acknowledging a decline in infrastructure would occur?

**When asked to make a choice between a SRV to renew infrastructure or NO SRV which would result in a decline of infrastructure, 56% of respondents expressed support for the SRV and 44% opposed the SRV.**

Question 3 – How supportive are you of exempting eligible pensioners from the 3% SRV?

**Results from the survey submissions indicate 75% of all respondents are at least “somewhat supportive” of exempting eligible pensioners from the proposed 3% SRV. 25% of all respondents were opposed.**

**Telephone Survey / Poll**

The same questions were put to 410 residents who participated in the telephone survey/poll. A summary of the primary questions and responses is outlined below:

Question 1 – How supportive are you of a SRV of 3% above the rate peg to renew essential infrastructure?

**Results from the telephone survey indicate that 81% of all respondents are at least “somewhat supportive” of the proposed rate increase versus 19% who are opposed.**

Question 2 – Which do you prefer – a SRV to renew infrastructure or NO SRV, acknowledging a decline in infrastructure would occur?

**When asked to make a choice between a SRV to renew infrastructure or no SRV which would result in a decline of infrastructure, 71% of respondents expressed support for the SRV and 29% opposed the SRV.**

Question 3 – How supportive are you of exempting eligible pensioners from the 3% SRV?

**Results from the survey submissions indicate 90% of all respondents are at least “somewhat supportive” of exempting eligible pensioners from the proposed 3% SRV. Only 10% of all respondents were opposed.**

**Petitions**

Council received two petitions containing the names, addresses and signatures of 1,904 people opposed to the proposed rate increase. An extract of the petition is included in the Reference Information (below).

**Reasons for Supporting or Opposing the proposed SRV**

The major reasons why people support the proposed SRV are because it is good value, investment in assets is important, and that Council is doing a good job that they want continued. The major reasons why people oppose the proposed SRV are because we should live within our means, reprioritise or cut services. People are also opposed because families are already feeling financial pressure and there is a sentiment that Council should be more efficient.

**Reference Information:**

**Community Engagement Plan & Submissions (Appendix 06)**

**Report to Council – SRV Community Consultation Feedback (Appendix 07)**

**Media Releases, Articles, Fact Sheets & Advertisements (Appendix 08)**

**Micromex Telephone Survey Results (Appendix 09)**

**Copy of Petition – extract only (CONFIDENTIAL) (Appendix 10)**

# Assessment criterion 3: Impact on ratepayers

Criterion 3 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The impact on affected ratepayers must be reasonable, having regard to both the current rate levels, existing ratepayer base and the proposed purpose of the variation. The IP&R processes should:*

* *clearly show the impact of any rises upon the community*
* *include the council’s consideration of the community’s capacity and willingness to pay rates and*
* *establish that the proposed rate increases are affordable having regard to the local community’s capacity to pay.*

The impact of the council’s proposed special variation on ratepayers must be reasonable. To do this, we take into account current rate levels, the existing ratepayer base and the purpose of the special variation. We also review how the council’s IP&R processes have assessed whether that the proposed rate rises are affordable having regard to the community’s capacity and willingness to pay.

## Impact on rates

Much of the quantitative information we need on the impact of the special variation on (General Fund) rate levels will already be contained in Worksheet 5a and 5b of Part A of the application.

To assist us further, the application should set out the rating structure under the proposed special variation, and how this may differ from the current rating structure, or that which would apply if the special variation is not approved.

We recognise that a council may choose to apply an increase differentially among categories of ratepayers. If so, you should explain the rationale for applying the increase differentially among different categories and/or subcategories of ratepayers. This will be relevant to our assessment of the reasonableness of the impact on ratepayers.

Councils should also indicate the impact of any other anticipated changes in the rating structure.

**Rating Structure**

Council has a rating structure that comprises Minimum Rates and an Ad Valorem Rate (rate in the $). In terms of rating mix, residents comprise approximately 90% of all ratepayers in the LGA and contribute approximately 60% of total rate revenue. Businesses comprise approximately 10% of all ratepayers in the LGA and contribute almost 40% of total rate revenue.

This rating structure and rating mix is not proposed to change as a result of the proposed additional 3% SRV. All ratepayers will be levied in accordance with the systems and structures already in place and adopted by Council.

**Average Residential & Business Rates**

Council published the overall impact of the proposed rate increase on average residential and business rates, and compared them to some of our neighbouring Councils. A copy can be found in the ‘Brochure’ sent to all households.

Essentially, the average residential rate will increase by an additional $25.50 per annum (or 50 cents per week) over and above IPART’s permissible 2.4% rate increase from approximately $870 per annum to $896 per annum.

Average Business Rates will increase by an additional $163 per annum (or $3.14 per week) over and above IPART’s permissible 2.4% rate increase from approximately $5,579 per annum to $5,742 per annum.

**Pensioners**

One of the concerns Council had with the proposed SRV was the impact it would have on Pensioners. One of the questions asked in the survey (both hard-copy survey form and telephone poll) was whether there was support for **exempting eligible pensioners** from the proposed 3% SRV.

The feedback council received was overwhelming. 75% of people who submitted their survey response stated they were at least ‘somewhat supportive’ of exempting eligible pensioners. In the telephone poll, 90% of respondents stated they were at least ‘somewhat supportive’ of exempting eligible pensioners.

In response to this, Council formally resolved to assist eligible Pensioners by offering a **Voluntary Rebate of $25.50 per annum**. The amount is fixed and reflects the impact of the additional 3% rate increase has on average residential rates.

The rebate will only be offered to eligible pensioners as at 1 July 2015 (ie people who become eligible pensioners after 1 July 2015 will not be eligible for the rebate).

**Reference Information:**

**Rates & Charges – General Policy (Appendix 11) – Within Appendix 24**

**SRV Information Brochure (Appendix 12)**

### Minimum Rates

The special variation may affect ordinary rates, special rates and/or minimum rates.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Does the council have residential minimum rates? | Yes X  | No [ ]  |

If *Yes*, Does the council propose to increase the minimum residential rate by:

The rate peg percentage NO

The special variation percentage YES

Another amount [ ]  Indicate this amount N/A

What will the residential minimum rate be after the RATE PEG % increase? **$637.55**

The council must explain how the proposed special variation will apply to the minimum rate of any ordinary and special rate, and any change to the proportion of ratepayers on the minimum rate for all relevant rating categories that will occur as a result.

You should also explain the types of ratepayers or properties currently paying minimum rates, and the rationale for the application of the special variation to minimum rate levels.

Council is proposing to increase the Minimum Rate by 5.4% from $604.89 in 2014/15 to $637.55 in 2015/16.

Council’s rationale for increasing the Minimum Rate by the proposed SRV is that all ratepayers will benefit from the proposed infrastructure asset renewal works. Infrastructure assets are considered a core public benefit consumed by all ratepayers. At the very least, all ratepayers have access to those infrastructure assets.

Approximately 40% of all residential ratepayers currently only pay the Minimum Rate of $604.89. The other 60% of residential ratepayers pay varying amounts above the Minimum Rate depending on the value of their land. Council is not due for another General Valuation until late 2015 which will not take effect until 1 July 2016. Therefore, the current 40% of all residential ratepayers is not expected to shift during 2015/16.

Council charges Minimum Rates to all residential properties valued (land value only) at less than $287,901. Typically, this would include apartments and homes (including dual occupancies) on very small blocks of land.

Businesses do not pay Minimum Rates. The rates received from businesses are based purely on the land value.

**Reference Information:**

**Rates versus Land Values Table (Appendix 13) – Within Appendix 24**

## Consideration of affordability and the community’s capacity and willingness to pay

The council is required to provide evidence through its IP&R processes, and in its application, of how it assessed the community’s capacity and willingness to pay the proposed rate increases. This is to include an explanation of how the council established that the proposed rate rises are affordable for the community.

Evidence about capacity to pay could include a discussion of such indicators as SEIFA rankings, land values, average rates, disposable incomes, the outstanding rates ratio and rates as a proportion of household/business/farmland income and expenditure, and how these measures relate to those in comparable or neighbouring council areas.

As many of these measures are highly aggregated, it may also be useful to discuss other factors that could better explain the impact on ratepayers affected by the proposed rate increases, particularly if the impact varies across different categories of ratepayers.

We may also consider how the council’s hardship policy (see Section 5.3 below) might reduce the impact on socio-economically disadvantaged ratepayers.

Council was conscious of a number of things when proposing a SRV. The increase had to be a modest amount and it needed to avoid imposing additional burdens on those that were already under financial pressure (eg pensioners).

Council already has a practice of not pursuing pensioners for outstanding rates.

Council has a relatively low outstanding rates percentage (3.4%) which may indicate the current spread of rates across the LGA is not overly taxing.

According to 2011 Census Data, Marrickville had one of the largest increases in household incomes in NSW, increasing by almost twice the State average. Rent and mortgage payments also rose, but not nearly as much as household income.

Certainly, Marrickville’s average residential rate compares favourably with its immediate neighbours. Even despite the proposed rate increase, Marrickville will still have one of the lowest average residential rates of all the Sydney Inner West Councils. Marrickville’s average business rate is comparable with our immediate neighbours.

It is also worth noting that Council proposes to only increase the Domestic Waste Management Charge by 2.5% in 2015/16.

**Reference Information:**

**Rates Comparison Table (Appendix 14) – Within Appendix 24**

**Marrickville Profile ID Information (Appendix 15)**

## Addressing hardship

In addition to the statutory requirement for pensioner rebates, most councils have a policy, formal or otherwise to address issues of hardship.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Does the council have a Hardship Policy? | Yes [ ]  | No X |
| If Yes, is an interest charge applied to late rate payments? | Yes X | No [ ]  |
| Does the council propose to introduce any measures to limit the impact of the proposed special variation on specific groups in the community? | Yes X | No [ ]  |

You should attach a copy of the Hardship Policy and explain below who the potential beneficiaries are and how they are assisted.

Please provide details of any other measures addressing hardship to be adopted, or alternatively, explain why no measures are proposed.

The council is also to indicate whether the policy or other measures are referenced in the council’s IP&R documents (with relevant page reference or extract provided).

Whilst Council does not have a formal Hardship Policy in place, it does have a Pensioner Policy in place to help manage pensioners who are experiencing difficulties paying their rates.

Council also has a Debt Recovery Policy that outlines Council’s general philosophy towards recovering outstanding debts. Negotiated ‘payment arrangements’ are part and parcel of the service we offer customers who are experiencing financial problems. Those payment arrangements typically provide customers with sufficient time to meet their outstanding commitments.

One of the concerns Council had with the proposed SRV was the impact it would have on pensioners. Following public feedback, Council resolved to offer a fixed Voluntary Rebate of $25.50 per annum to help eligible pensioners cope with the financial impost this additional rate increase would have on them.

From time to time, Council also receives claims for Financial Hardship from ratepayers. A copy of the form is attached.

**Reference Information:**

**Debt Recovery Policy (Appendix 16) – Within Appendix 24**

**Pensioner Policy (Appendix 17) – Within Appendix 24**

**Financial Hardship Form (Appendix 18)**

# Assessment criterion 4: Public exhibition of relevant IP&R documents

Criterion 4 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The relevant IP&R documents[[5]](#footnote-5) must be exhibited (where required), approved and adopted by the council before the council applies to IPART for a special variation to its general revenue.*

Briefly outline the significant IP&R processes the council has undertaken to reach the decision to apply for a special variation. Include the details of and dates for key document revisions, public exhibition period(s) and the date(s) that the council adopted the relevant IP&R documents.

You should also include extracts from council minutes as evidence that the documents were adopted.

The council is reminded that amendments to the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program require public exhibition for at least 28 days prior to adoption, while amendments to the Long Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plan/s do not require public exhibition.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Council’s Asset Management Plans have continued to evolve since Integrated Planning and Reporting was formally introduced in 2010/11. In particular, Council’s asset management systems have become more sophisticated and the capturing of infrastructure assets condition-based assessments more systematic.

In developing the Asset Management Plans for 2014/15, Council undertook an exhaustive examination of its primary asset categories (transport, drainage, carparks etc) that involved comprehensive reconciliations between the cost of infrastructure renewal and available funding levels.

However, the focus was not just renewal, it was on maintenance, operational costs and the cost of new priority capital projects. The result of this work is best illustrated by the Appendix titled “What is Our Annual Shortfall?” contained within Council’s Resource Strategy.

Council considered a report on 24 June 2014 titled “Infrastructure Asset Renewal – A Case for Deliberative Democracy”. This report put into context the picture Council’s Asset Management Plans were painting. Council resolved to form a Citizens Jury to investigate the matter with a view to testing the assumptions Council had made in developing the Plans and determining an appropriate level of service for each of Council’s major infrastructure asset categories.

New service levels were established by the Jury and adopted by Council. Accordingly, Council’s IP&R documents were updated to reflect the new service levels and were placed on public exhibition from 5 December 2014 for a period of 2 months.

**Documents publicly exhibited included:**

1. Resource Strategy (document that underpins council’s CSP)

2. Delivery Program

3. Long Term Financial Plan, and

4. Asset Management Plans

Public exhibition of the documents ceased on Friday, 6 February 2015 and were adopted by Council on Tuesday 17 February 2015.

 **Reference Information:**

**Resource Strategy – What is our Annual Shortfall? (Appendix 19) – Within Appendix 25**

**Report to Council – Infrastructure Asset Renewal – A Case for Deliberative Democracy (Appendix 20) – Within Appendix 25**

**Report to Council – Resolution to apply for a SRV & Adopt IP&R documents (Appendix 21)**

# Assessment criterion 5: Productivity improvements and cost containment strategies

Criterion 5 within the OLG Guidelines is:

*The IP&R document or the council’s application must explain the productivity improvements and cost containment strategies the council has realised in past years, and plans to realise over the proposed special variation period.*

In this section, you must provide details of any productivity improvements and cost containment strategies that you have implemented in the last two years (or longer) and any plans for productivity improvements and cost containment during the period of the special variation.

These strategies, which may be capital or recurrent in nature, must be aimed at reducing costs and/or improving efficiency. Indicate if any initiatives are to increase revenue eg, user charges. Identify if the proposed initiatives (ie, cost savings), have been factored into the council’s resourcing strategy (eg, LTFP and AMP).

Where possible, the council is to quantify in dollar terms the past and future productivity improvements and cost savings.

The council may also provide indicators of efficiency, either over time or in comparison to other relevant councils. We will make similar comparisons using various indicators and OLG data provided to us.

Marrickville Council has a proven track record of identifying productivity improvements and bringing to account expenditure savings and/or additional revenue raising opportunities.

Initiated in 2009, an efficiency/productivity plan saw major improvements in Council’s financial position with little or no impact on services. These included new park management practices, improved operational efficiency, and better workplace safety and injury management. Council also generated significant savings in its delivery of Waste Services. Combined, these initiatives have released more than $3m in funds since they were introduced.

In more recent years, Council has introduced a productivity/efficiency dividend into its annual budget. The dividend has grown from $350,000 pa to $600,000 pa over the past 3 years. The inclusion of this dividend into the annual budget is supported by Council’s Continuous Improvement Program, ‘Marrickville 360’.

Council has made considerable progress in reducing its annual workers compensation and insurance premiums. A combination of preventative measures and an improved claims experience record has enabled Council to estimate an annual saving of $200,000 in recent times.

Council is also making significant savings through its new centre-led approach to the procurement of goods and services (particularly those procurements valued in excess of $150,000). Recent tenders indicate that Council can continue to benefit from high value material and contract tenders.

Recent investments in energy efficient systems and devices are beginning to provide returns on investments which should assist Council’s budget position long into the future. Examples include solar lighting and led lighting systems in some of Council’s major facilities.

Today, in addition to the $600,000 already factored in the 2015/16 Budget for productivity/efficiency gains and approximately $1,000,000 in efficiencies in the Resource Recovery area which have already been factored into the Domestic Waste Management Charge, Council is proposing to implement a targeted annual Productivity Improvement Plan aimed at generating an additional $1,000,000 per annum **(total recurrent target is therefore $1,600,000 per annum**).

This plan will be designed in such a way that it does not adversely impact on the range of services Council currently provides to the community or on the level of service offered to the community.

In addition to reviewing all income and expenditure allocations for 2015/16 and beyond with a view to eliminating any non-essential items and scrutinising discretionary expenditure, Council will be targeting ongoing expenditure savings to ensure the additional $1,000,000 is realised.

Council sees the vast majority of its productivity improvements and cost saving measures coming from the following 7 point plan:

1. Accelerated efforts in digitisation and on-line transactional business to not only expedite business dealings with customers but also reduce the need for additional resources to service customer enquiries

2. Bulk procurement - large value materials and contract tenders have the potential to offer significant savings to Council. We will invest the time to analyse supply spend with a view to consolidating suppliers and going to tender more often

3. Ongoing analysis of all staff related costs – involves an exhaustive examination of everything from vacant positions to rostered work, and from penalties and overtime to the cost of our light vehicle fleet (leaseback vehicles offered to officers)

4. Ongoing reassessment of debt (internal loan borrowings) – continuing the trend of borrowing from internal reserves rather than externally through the banks

5. Ongoing installation of energy efficiency systems with attractive pay-back periods – Council’s environmentally sustainable focus will always ensure viable projects with attractive returns are highly prioritised

6. Reduction in non-essential organisational expenditure allocations (where capacity exists and is supported by historical trends), and

7. Initiatives arising from Council’s Continuous Improvement Program, Marrickville 360. This is a staff led program aimed at (among many other things) reducing waste, duplication and using technology to save time and money

# List of attachments

The following is a list of the supporting documents to include with your application. Some of these attachments will be mandatory to all special variation applications eg, Attachment 1, extracts from the Community Strategic Plan. Other attachments will be required from some, but not all, councils. For example, Attachment 10, extracts from the Asset Management Plan, would be required from a council seeking approval of a special variation to fund infrastructure. Councils should submit their application forms and attachments online through the Council Portal in the following order.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Included? |
| **Mandatory forms and Attachments** |  |
| Part A Section 508A and Section 508(2) Application form (Excel spreadsheet)  | X |
| Part B Application form (Word document) – this document | X |
| Attachment 1: Relevant extracts from the Community Strategic Plan (Resource Strategy) | X |
| Attachment 2: Delivery Program | X |
| Attachment 3: Long Term Financial Plan with projected (General Fund) financial statements (Income, Cash Flow and Financial Position) in Excel format  | X |
| Attachment 4: TCorp report on financial sustainability | X |
| Attachment 5: Media releases, public meeting notices, newspaper articles, fact sheets relating to the rate increase and special variation | X |
| Attachment 6: Community feedback (including surveys and results if applicable) | X |
| Attachment 7: Hardship Policy | X |
| Attachment 8: Resolution to apply for the special variation | X |
| Attachment 9: Certification | X |
| **Other Attachments** |  |
| Attachment 10: Relevant extracts from the Asset Management Plan  | X |
| Attachment 11: Past Instruments of Approval (if applicable) | X |
| Attachment 12: Resolution to adopt the revised Community Strategic Plan (if necessary) and/or Delivery Program | X |

NOTE: All of the above attachments are included in the table of Reference Information on the next page.

**TABLE OF REFERENCE INFORMATION**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Appendix 01 | Resource Strategy (includes extracts of AMPs) |
| Appendix 02 | Delivery Program |
| Appendix 03a | Long Term Financial Plan |
| Appendix 03b | Long Term Financial Plan (Excel model) |
| Appendix 04 | TCorp Financial Assessment of Marrickville Council |
| Appendix 05 | Community Satisfaction Survey |
| Appendix 06 | Community Engagement Plan & Submissions |
| Appendix 07 | Report to Council – SRV Community Consultation Feedback |
| Appendix 08 | Media Releases, Articles, Fact Sheets, Advertisements etc |
| Appendix 09 | Micromex Telephone Survey Results |
| Appendix 10 | Copy of Petition (extract only) - **CONFIDENTIAL** |
| Appendix 11 | Rates & Charges – General Policy (See Note 1 Below) |
| Appendix 12 | SRV Information Brochure to all Households |
| Appendix 13 | Rates versus Land Values Table (See Note 1 Below) |
| Appendix 14 | Rates Comparison Table (See Note 1 Below) |
| Appendix 15 | Marrickville Profile ID Information |
| Appendix 16 | Debt Recovery Policy (See Note 1 below) |
| Appendix 17 | Pensioner Policy (See Note 1 below) |
| Appendix 18 | Financial Hardship Form |
| Appendix 19 | Resource Strategy – What is our Annual Shortfall? (See Note 2 below) |
| Appendix 20 | Report to Council – Infrastructure Asset Renewal – A Case for Deliberative Democracy (See Note 2 below) |
| Appendix 21 | Resolution to Apply for a SRV & Adopt IP&R Documents  |
| Appendix 22  | Certification – Signed Application for a SRV |
| Appendix 23 | Past Instruments of Approval |
| Appendix 24 | Miscellaneous Financial Information  |
| Appendix 25 | Infrastructure Asset Renewal Information |

Note 1 – Appendices 11, 13, 14, 16 & 17 are all contained in Appendix 24

Note 2 – Appendices 19 & 20 are both contained in Appendix 25

# Certification

**APPLICATION FOR A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION**

**To be completed by General Manager and Responsible Accounting Officer**

Name of council: Marrickville Council

We certify that to the best of our knowledge the information provided in this application is correct and complete.

General Manager (name): Mr Brian Barrett

Signature and Date:

Responsible Accounting Officer (name): Mr Steve Kludass

Signature and Date:

Once completed, please scan the signed certification and attach it as a public supporting document online via the Council Portal on IPART’s website.

1. The Guidelines are available at [www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The OLG’s October 2014 *Guidelines* and the IP&R Manual outline this link between the special variation and the IP&R process. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Planning Circular 10-025 dated 24 November 2010 at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au) and for the most recent Direction issued under section 94E of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. See also Planning Circular PS 10-022 dated 16 September 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Relevant documents are the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Long Term Financial Plan and where applicable, the Asset Management Plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Office of Local Government (the then Division of Local Government), *Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual for local government in NSW*, March 2013, pp 5 - 6. See http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/Intergrated-Planning-and-Reporting-Manual-March-2013.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-6)