

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)  
Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place  
Sydney NSW 2000

Attention: Mr John Madden

11 March 2019

By Email: [ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au);  
[John.Madden@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:John.Madden@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

**Objection: North Sydney Council Rate Variation Application 2019**

I am a resident of the North Sydney Council Local Government Area and write to express my strong concerns and objections to Council's application for a Special Rate Variation (SRV).

I ask IPART to **reject** Council's application for a 7% increase each year for the 5-year period commencing 2019/2020 and my reasons are outlined below.

**There appears to be no financial justification**

North Sydney Council appears to be in good financial shape as it continues to run and project surpluses.

Council has just concluded an IPART approved SRV which ran from 1/7/12 to 30/6/18. This SRV was accepted by the community as a "one off" rate increase to address particular issues which have now been fixed.

Council has not provided evidence that its financial situation is such that a second, even higher, SRV is required. Council meets and exceeds Office of Local Government financial benchmarks.

Further, Council has not taken into consideration the increased rate revenue that will come from the rateable properties that are currently under construction in North Sydney.

In short, the Council's finances do not justify a 7%pa rate increase (40% increase over 5 years!)

**No exploration of other revenue streams**

Council has not explored alternatives to a rate increase such as

- Alternative revenue streams;
- Adjusting service levels;
- Improved efficiencies;
- Use of special levies for particular projects.

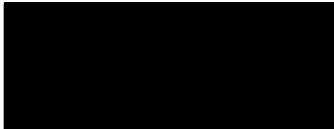
**Cost of Living**

Many of the ratepayers in North Sydney Council area are on fixed incomes and added to this we are in a period of low interest rates and very low wage growth. Recently, we have seen large increases in the cost of utilities; the approval of this SRV will create another financial burden for those who can least afford it.

An increase of 7%pa (40% increase in rates over 5 years!) is unjustified.

I urge you to reject North Sydney Council's application for a SRV.

Yours Faithfully,

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11/3/19