



March 14, 2014

Independent Pricing & Regulatory Tribunal
Level 8, 1 Market Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Warringah Council Special Variation

This is to record our opposition to Warringah Council's request for a special variation.

Our opposition is already on record & is included in Attachment 7 – Community Feedback – Item 4 which is reproduced below.

In summary, our objections are that:-

- (A) Our rates have already increased by 76.7% over the last 7 years;
- (B) There seems to be no provision in the rating process to take into account VG valuation increases which automatically increase Council's revenue;
- (C) Council needs to address gross inefficiencies in its operations.

Please refer to Submission 4 (below) for further details.

As a further example of incompetence, Council advised in April 2013 that our property had been reclassified as being in a flood prone area, which, if unchallenged, could have had serious negative impact on our property value. Fortunately, this classification was withdrawn after we pointed out that it was totally inaccurate. We mention this as a further example of ratepayers' money being spent on incompetent studies.

“Submission 4

We strongly oppose the proposed SRV.

In the last 7 years, our Ordinary Residential rate has increased by 76.7% (or an average of 11% pa), and waste charges have increased by 131.7%, with no improvement in services. Our rates for the 2013 / 2014 year are already 95% higher than the average rate quoted in Council's proposal!

This raises the question as to whether in its income projections, Council has factored in the automatic increase in Council income resulting from the Valuer General's 3-yearly review of property values.

Council needs to look for ways of improving efficiencies rather than simply asking for more money from ratepayers.

In addition to comments already posted regarding its bloated bureaucracy, we suggest that Council needs to stop wasting money on projects that are of no benefit to ratepayers. Recent examples include the building & then rebuilding kerbside pods in Lawrence Street, Freshwater which remain unused, and have resulted in the loss of several parking spaces. Secondly, the reportedly significant sum wasted on developing and implementing a new logo and web site– for what benefit to ratepayers? Note that in preparing these comments, I encountered two separate failures on the web site, where links failed to work!

Then there's the Kentwell Road, North Manly Tennis Centre which Council decided it should manage. Why has Council decided that it should manage this facility? Council exists to provide facilities and services to ratepayers – not to manage commercial operations. This should be left to private enterprises – not inefficient local government.

As a further example of Council inefficiency, I have just attempted to access the Mayor's Message about this proposal, only to get the response "Access Denied – 403 Sorry, access to that page is restricted". (at 11.00am November 6, 2013)"

Yours faithfully,

Colin & Kerry Gregan