



Kevin Alker
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6th February 1919

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
2-24 Rawson Pl
Sydney 2000

Dear Commissioners

Re: Rate Rise Proposal North Sydney

I am raising my concerns regarding the substantial and unjustified rate rise proposed for North Sydney by the Council.

- **Council consulting residents and businesses.** Just before Christmas is not the time. The public have their mind on other things at this time of the year and it is the time things get sneaked through. Council's decision (not unanimous) in support of the rate rise then occurred on the Australia Day public holiday (28 February 2019). Is this public consultation or mere placation?
- **Council has not presented a plausible case for a rate increase.** It has been rumoured that Council has \$50m in reserves.
- **Modelling would have been done on the basis of the last 3 years** when Council was actively spending as much as it could, to get rid of its surplus, so the proposed amalgamated Council area with Willoughby and Mosman didn't get a windfall from North Sydney. The spending spree was common knowledge.
- I have noted road and guttering work being carried out which is not necessary. Also Council staff planting in Waverton Park on a Sunday?
- The suggestion is that nearly 50% of revenue comes from rates. It is actually 38%. (Source local ward councillor). No exploration seems to have been made of other revenue sources, even if additional funds are required.
- It is understood North Sydney **Council meets or betters all financial targets set by the Office of Local Government.**
- No account appears to have been taken of the massive increase in development already approved both commercial (152,491sqm) and residential which will substantially increase the rate base.
- S7.11 (formerly s94) contributions under the EP&A Act for new infrastructure is also at record levels.
- The VG continues to increase land values in the area increasing rate income.
- **My rates**, as a self-funded retiree, over the last 5 years have jumped from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] an increase of 58%. (Annual CPI would average about 2%pa) Proposed rate increase for next year under the maintain services scenario for my home is [REDACTED]. That would be over 100% increase in my rates over 6 years. What else has gone up by this incredible amount over this period?

My calculations are that over the next 5 years from my 2018 rates, I will see a further 63% increase.

This rate increase is unwarranted and unjustified. If it were to go ahead Council will be awash with funds and I would suggest senior council staff will be looking for a raise, given the supposed great job they have done in financial management.

Please do not support this tax rip-off.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Kevin Alker.

Kevin Alker