

OBJECTION TO HAWKESBURY COUNCIL SRV – FEB 2018:-

I STRONGLY oppose the Hawkesbury Council Special Rate Variation :-

1- The Rates Review by council for 2017/2018 rates resulted in an increase for our area of 110% to 160% over the rates of 2016/2017. This is UNAFFORDABLE and TOTALLY UNFAIR seeing 80% of ratepayers in Hawkesbury received a rate reduction of 10% to 20%.

2- To impose a 20 or 30% SRV on rates that have had a 110 - 160% increase will be totally unaffordable to local ratepayers in this area.

3 We have an aging population and most of the local residents have lived here for 30 and 40 years and are now in their senior years. Their income is basically fixed and to demand more rates will need to come from the same fixed income which will be financially crippling for us.

4- This year I will pay \$80 a week to Hawkesbury City Council and all I get for this is a Garbage Pick Up. Council never cuts the roadside grass (we do it ourselves) and never fixes the road. I never use the facilities that the Windsor and Bligh Park residents have available as they are too remote from my home. Government (eg road tolls) now seem to be financing everything on a user pay criteria why not let the users fund the facilities. I will pay for the garbage pick-up in that case.

5- This Councils UNFAIR RATE structure MUST revised.

6- The fact that Land Value has increased has NO RELATIONSHIP to our DISPOSABLE INCOME and yet Council uses this excuse to demand a huge slice of our already tightly budgeted fixed income. Perhaps I can give a few square metres of my LAND as my rate payment. Land Values were inflated by as much as 30% due to the influx of “cashed up” buyers from the neighbouring Box Hill/Rouse Hill land subdivisions. This is a unique once off event.

7-Hawkesbury Council told the NSW Government they were Fit for Future to prevent a merger with the Hills Council. Now they need a SRV because they are NOT Fit for Future. Can we trust the current Labor councillors to run the Hawkesbury district ? Today I learnt that council at meeting on Feb 27 approved the expenditure of an estimated \$10,000 or more changing the toilet signs to Gender Neutral. This was approved after discussion with only the LGBTQI and solely for the “comfort” of a very small portion of the community. Why not have the signs also in Braille for the Blind or a sound /visual device for the hearing impaired, or MULTI LINGUAL for the community that does not have ENGLISH as their first language ????? This council is spending ratepayer money to endear themselves ONE GROUP (politically popular at this time) and at the same time saying to the ratepayers they need a 30% SRV to fund the basic functions of the council.

8-The UNFAIR RATING FORMULA currently used by the Council needs to be revised. A better way to assess rates other than estimated land value which is a NON CASH asset, needs to be found.

Not all Oakville residents fall into the median income published in your draft report and certainly do not all fall into the higher privileged Socio - Economic index bracket as suggested in the SRV report. That is a common error when you only use selected/averaged data in making deductions.

Kind regards Mike Geuder