

## **ASSESSMENT OF SCHOFIELDS DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS PLAN**

**10am, 11 August 2014**

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is recommending changes to reduce the costs associated with the development of Blacktown City Council's Schofields Precinct.

IPART's assessment of Blacktown City Council's Draft Section 94 Contributions Plan for the Schofields Precinct found that while most of the infrastructure and costs in the plan are reasonable, there is scope to reduce both the infrastructure proposed and the cost estimates.

Section 94 contributions are payments by developers to councils that are used to fund community facilities and other infrastructure for new development areas. IPART reviews the content of certain contributions plans if the planned development contributions exceed the cap of \$30,000 per dwelling or lot in greenfield areas, or \$20,000 in all other areas.

The maximum contributions rate per residential lot in the Schofields Precinct is proposed by the council to be \$81,174, with council able to seek funding beyond the allowed cap through the Local Infrastructure Growth Scheme or via a special variation application to IPART.

Chairperson of IPART's Local Government Committee, Catherine Jones said the assessment reinforces IPART's findings from previous reviews that the cost of providing infrastructure in north west Sydney is significant and is well above the caps.

"The total cost for developing the precinct for the 7,335 residents forecast to live at Schofields is around \$159.3 million according to the plan submitted by council," Ms Jones said.

"Of this cost, 28% is for land, 71% is for embellishment and facilities, and 1% is for plan preparation and administration costs.

"While we have found that the majority of infrastructure and costs are reasonable, we have identified savings that would reduce the overall cost to around \$139.5 million, and the contribution required for each dwelling by around \$7,800 or 11% for low density dwellings and up to 19% for medium density dwellings."

IPART's recommendations include reducing the provision of some open space infrastructure, due to a combination of oversupply for the expected population, the location of two parks, the reallocation of costs and some changes to stormwater design.

A full copy of IPART's assessment is available at [ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://ipart.nsw.gov.au). The Minister for Planning will consider IPART's recommendations and may request the council to amend the plan prior to its adoption.

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