



IPART Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal | NSW

Minimum Rate Increase
Application Form Part B

Application Form

2025-26

Local Government >>

Acknowledgment of Country

IPART acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We pay respect to Elders both past and present.

We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship and celebrate the contributions of First Nations peoples.

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The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

IPART's independence is underpinned by an Act of Parliament. Further information on IPART can be obtained from [IPART's website](#).

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Council information

Council name	North Sydney Council
Date submitted to IPART	10 February 2025

1 About this Application Form

This Application Form is to be completed by councils applying for an increase to a minimum rate (MR) for 2025-26 above the statutory limit under s 548(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act). The Application Form for a minimum rate increase (MR increase) is in two parts:

- Application Form [Part A](#) (separate Excel spreadsheet)
- Minimum Rate Increase Application Form Part B (this MS Word document).

Councils can apply for an MR increase either in conjunction with a special variation (SV) under s 508(2) or s 508A of the LG Act, or as a stand-alone adjustment (i.e. without also seeking an increase to general income in place of the rate peg).

Councils applying for an MR increase in conjunction with an SV should complete this form and SV Application Form [Part B](#). In addition, they should complete the Application Form [Part A](#) that covers both MR and SV increases.

This MR Increase Application Form Part B consists of:

- Description and Context Questions
- Criterion 1: Rationale for increasing minimum rates above the statutory limit
- Criterion 2: Impact on ratepayers
- Criterion 3: Consultation on the proposal
- Other relevant matters
- Council certification and contact information
- List of attachments

Under each section, we provide some guidance to complete the section. However, when preparing their application, including this form, councils should refer to:

- [OLG's MR Guidelines](#) issued in November 2020
- section 4 of IPART's [Guidance Booklet - Special variations: How to prepare and apply](#), in particular for information about community awareness and engagement for special variations and minimum rates.

2 Preparing your application

Ordinary rates – minimum amounts

Councils must apply to increase the minimum amount of an ordinary rate above the statutory limit where:

- The council is currently charging a minimum ordinary rate at or below the statutory limit and is seeking to increase its minimum rate(s) above the statutory limit for the first time.
- The council is currently charging a minimum ordinary rate(s) above the statutory limit and is seeking to increase its minimum rate(s) in 2025-26 by more than the rate peg percentage or the percentage allowed by an approved SV.
- The council is currently charging a minimum ordinary rate(s) at or below the statutory limit and, as part of implementing a proposed SV for 2025-26 (whether applying a lower, higher or the same percentage increase as the requested SV percentage) the increase would result in a minimum rate(s) that is above the statutory limit for the first time.

Councils **do not need** to apply for an increase to minimum ordinary rates in the following circumstances, whether or not they are applying for an SV:

- The proposed increase (even if it is above the rate peg percentage) would result in a minimum rate(s) which are still below the statutory limit.
- The minimum rate(s) is already above the statutory limit (having previously been granted approval for the rate(s) to be above the statutory limit) and the council proposes to increase the minimum rate(s) by the rate peg percentage or the percentage allowed by an approved SV.

If an MR increase application is approved, IPART will issue the instrument in **dollar terms** rather than percentage increase(s). The statutory limit of the minimum amount of an ordinary rate is set out in clause 126 of the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, which is typically updated annually.

Special rates – minimum amounts

Councils must apply to increase (even if the proposed increase is by the rate peg percentage or the same as a proposed special variation) the minimum amount of a special rate above the statutory limit of \$2 or a previously approved limit.

Attaching supporting material

Responses in the text boxes should clearly cross-reference where the information is located in the supporting documents attached to the council's application.

It is not necessary to submit a document with the MR Increase Part B Application Form if the same document is submitted as part of an SV application.

Confidential content in supporting material

We will publish all applications (excluding any confidential content) on our website. The submission process allows councils to highlight confidential content. Examples of confidential content include personal information relating to a member of the public or a document which includes commercial-in-confidence content.

Councils should ensure supporting documents are redacted to remove confidential content where possible, or clearly marked as **CONFIDENTIAL**. To protect confidential details in submissions from ratepayers, either redact or submit as a confidential attachment.

Submitting the application online

Applications must be submitted through IPART's [LG Portal](#) by 11:59pm on Monday, 3 February 2025.

A council will need to register before first using the LG Portal. You can find user information, including guidance for uploading SV and MR applications [here](#).

Maximum file size allowed per document is 150 megabytes.

Contact Arsh Suri on (02) 9113 7730 or localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au for assistance with using the [LG Portal](#).

3 Description and context

These questions seek general information about the council’s application to increase minimum rates.

Question 1: What is the increase to minimum rate(s) the council is applying for?

The response will provide a high-level summary of the proposal to increase minimum rates. Detailed information about the increase is collected in Application Form Part A. However, if only applying for an MR increase (not an SV), please note that not all sections of Application Form Part A need to be filled out. Further details about what needs to be completed is provided in Worksheet 1 of the Part A application form after selecting the nature of the application as a ‘Minimum Rates Increase’ application.

If the increase applies to an ordinary rate, complete this section

Does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of its ordinary rate(s) above the statutory limit for the first time?	No
Which rating category(s) will the increase(s) apply to? If the increase will apply to some subcategory(s), please specify them in the text box also.	Residential and Business.
Please specify the proposed dollar amount(s) per rating category (and if applicable per subcategory) that the council considers would need to apply in 2025-26.	Residential - \$1,200 Business - \$1,400
Does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of its ordinary rate(s) for 2025-26 by the rate peg percentage, the proposed SV percentage, a previously approved SV percentage, or a different percentage?	a different percentage Residential, 67.83% 2025/26 and 29% 2026/27 Business, 95.8% 2025/26 and 29% 2026/27.
For multi-year increases, please specify the proposed dollar amount(s) per rating category (and if applicable per subcategory) that council considers would need to apply in each proposed year after 2025-26.	Residential 2025/26 - \$1,200 2026/27 - \$1,548 Business 2025/26 - \$1,400 2026/27 - \$1,806

<p>For multi-year increases, does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of its ordinary rate(s) by the rate peg percentage, the proposed SV percentage, a previously approved SV percentage or a different percentage? Please specify for each proposed year after 2025-26.</p>	<p>SV percentage in 2026/27 and then the rate peg.</p> <p>2026/27 – SV (29%)</p> <p>2027/28 onwards – rate peg</p>
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If the increase applies to a special rate, complete this section

<p>Does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of a special rate above the statutory limit?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of its special rate(s) by the rate peg percentage, SV percentage or a different percentage?</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p> <p>X%</p>
<p>Please specify the proposed dollar amount(s) for the special rate that the council considers would need to apply in 2025-26 (and for multi-year increases, for each financial year after 2025-26).</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>For multi-year increases, does the council propose to increase the minimum amount of its special rate(s) by the rate peg percentage, the proposed SV percentage, a previously approved SV percentage or a different percentage? Please specify for each proposed year after 2025-26.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Question 2: What is the key purpose(s) for requesting to increase minimum rate(s) above the statutory limit?

In the **text box** indicate at the highest level the key purpose(s) of the proposed increase to minimum rates. The purposes could include one or a combination of:

- increasing minimum rates by the rate peg percentage
- maintaining an equitable allocation of the rating burden across the council’s rating categories
- improving the equitable allocation of the rating burden across the council’s rating categories
- matching the level of minimum rates in comparable councils
- improving financial sustainability (assuming there is a related SV application), and/or
- increasing a special rate by the rate peg percentage.

The key purpose of the increase to minimum rates is to improve Council's financial sustainability and to improve the equity between those on the minimum rate and those on the ad-valorem.

As shown in the Long Term Financial Plan, without an increase to rates revenue, Council has an unsustainable financial future.

Of the 36,871 residential assessments in the LGA, 77.26% of ratepayers currently pay the minimum rate. This is primarily due to the high density within the area and the practice of levying rates based on unimproved land values.

With Council's population expected to grow by approximately 20% by 2036, future housing growth is primarily expected to come from new apartment developments.

If these new apartments pay the minimum rate of (currently) \$715, this does not reflect the additional cost to Council of the increased infrastructure and services required to them.

To avoid the ad valorem rate payers taking a large burden of these costs, increasing the minimum will enable Council to recover sufficient costs to pay for the increased infrastructure and services and return to financial sustainability. .

4 Criterion 1 – Rationale for increasing minimum rates above the statutory limit

Criterion 1 in the MR Guidelines is:

The rationale for increasing minimum rates above the statutory amount.

The MR Guidelines discuss minimum rates in the context of rating principles in Attachment 1. The MR Guidelines state that:

Where applicable, councils should make reference to the relevant parts of their Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documentation to demonstrate how the criteria have been met.^a

We expect councils to be able to provide evidence of how the proposal to increase minimum rates was developed in the context of the council's IP&R framework, and councils should refer to the relevant parts of their IP&R documents.

How to respond for Criterion 1

The council's response should be tailored to the specific circumstances of the minimum rate increase, including whether it is part of a proposal for an SV.

If the increase to minimum rates is **in conjunction** with a proposed SV, the response for criterion 1 should focus on the aspects directly relevant to the proposed MR increase. It is not necessary to duplicate all the information explaining how the council established financial need which is included in the response for criterion 1 in the SV Application Form Part B.

Where applicable, councils should provide references to their IP&R documents dealing with the proposal to increase minimum rates to demonstrate how the criterion has been met.

4.1 What is the council's rationale for increasing minimum rates above the statutory limit?

In the text boxes the response should:

- Explain how the council developed the proposal in the context of its IP&R framework, including the SV proposal, if relevant.
- Explain why the council considers the increase to minimum rates is necessary.
- Discuss both the benefits and drawbacks of the proposed changes to the rating structure.

^a OLG, MR Guidelines, section 2.2.

a. Why the council is seeking to introduce or increase minimum rates above the statutory limit.

As outlined in the SV Application Form Part B, and the Long-Term Financial Plan, Council's finances are unsustainable without an increase to rates revenue.

As rates are levied on land values, apartments generally pay significantly less than houses, even when the property values are comparable. This does not reflect the cost of service provision to these residents nor their capacity to pay rates.

With the NSW Government Housing Targets, North Sydney is expecting approximately 20% growth in residents by 2036.

With the expected increase in residents largely coming from new apartment developments, it is important Council has a minimum rate reflective of the cost of providing infrastructure and services to these new residents.

A higher minimum rate will enable Council to better balance the costs of service and capacity to pay rates with the increase in apartment developments, in a fairer and more equitable way, now and into the future.

b. How the proposed minimum rates are to be applied.

As per the LTFP, Council proposes to apply a \$1,200 minimum on residential rates in 2025/26, and \$1,548 in 2026/27. The 2026/27 increase is by the SV amount of 29% for that year.

Council proposes to apply a \$1,400 minimum on business rates in 2025/26 and \$1,806 in 2026/27. The 2026/27 increase is also by the SV amount of 29% for that year.

c. What benefits and drawbacks of the proposed changes to the rating structure have been identified?

The benefits of the proposed increase of minimum rates include that Council will have a fairer and more equitable rating structure, and that the rates burden of the SV will not affect ad-valorem rate payers disproportionately.

This is particularly important as Council prepares for growth in the community which will require new infrastructure and expanded services.

The proposed increase to minimum rate will also assist in improving Council's short- and long-term financial sustainability, in tandem with the proposed SV.

The drawbacks are that some minimum ratepayers may be considered to have a lower capacity to pay. However, this was not found in the independent capacity to pay analysis and will be lessened by Council's Hardship Policy if it was to occur.

Table 1 Criterion 1 attachments

Attachment number	Name of document	Page references
Attachment 1	Long Term Financial Plan 2025-2035	Page 19 - 21
Attachment 2	Amended Delivery Program 2022-2026	Page 63
Attachment 7	Capacity to pay analysis	Page 25
Attachment 29	Hardship Policy	All

5 Criterion 2 – Impact on ratepayers

Criterion 2 in the MR Guidelines is:

The impact on ratepayers, including the level of the proposed minimum rates and the number and proportion of ratepayers that will be on the minimum rates, by rating category or subcategory.

The criterion requires consideration of two elements:

- the level of minimum rates for ratepayers whose rates will be increased, and
- the distribution of the rate burden in the particular category or subcategory between those paying minimum rates and those paying an amount based on the value of their property.

Although it is a matter for each council to determine its rating structure, including the level of minimum rates, for this criterion, IPART will assess the proposal on its merits, but will consider how the proposed minimum rates accord with the principles of rating, by looking at:

- the absolute and percentage increase in minimum rates proposed for ratepayers paying the minimum amount
- how the council will manage any adverse impact on ratepayers
- how the increase in minimum rates affects the equitable distribution of the rate burden among all ratepayers in the category or subcategory.

As the minimum rate is the lowest amount that is paid by ratepayers in any rating category, the impact of the proposed increase to minimum rates may not, of itself, be as significant as the same percentage increase to rate levels above the minimum. Nevertheless, IPART expects that councils will be able to demonstrate how they have considered its affordability and the affected ratepayers' capacity to pay.

IPART will make its own assessment of the affected ratepayers' capacity to pay by reference to evidence provided by the council and our own analysis using socioeconomic indicators, including as they relate to those for comparable councils in the council's OLG grouping.

How to respond for Criterion 2

By completing the Application Form [Part A](#), councils will provide full details of current and proposed levels of minimum rates and the number of ratepayers affected. The response to the first question for criterion 2 requires only a summary of this information.

If the increase to minimum rates is in conjunction with a proposed SV, the response for the other questions for criterion 2 should focus on the aspects of the impact on ratepayers and its affordability which are directly relevant to the proposed MR increase. It is not necessary to duplicate all the information providing details included in the response for criterion 3 in the SV Application Form [Part B](#).

The council's response to the other questions for criterion 2 should explain the specific circumstances of the minimum rate increase, including whether it applies to an ordinary or special rate and whether it is part of a proposal for an SV, and the characteristics of the ratepayers who will be affected.

Where applicable, councils should provide references to their IP&R documents dealing with the proposal to increase minimum rates to demonstrate how the criterion has been met.

The response to this criterion should refer to matter such as:

- the extent to which the new minimum rates exceed the equivalent ad valorem rates that would apply in the absence of the minimum rates
- the overall impact on ratepayers resulting from the proposed increase
- steps that have been taken to distribute the rate burden equitably
- affected ratepayers' capacity to pay the higher level of rates, overall and by each rating subcategory
- how the council plans to address hardship ratepayers may experience in meeting their obligations to pay rates in the future.

In considering capacity to pay, you may also want to consider how the council's socioeconomic profile and other relevant measures of capacity to pay relate to those for comparable councils. IPART will also review various socio-economic indicators, particularly as they relate to those for comparable councils in your OLG grouping.

5.1 What are the current and proposed levels of minimum rates, and the number of ratepayers on the minimum rate over the application period?

In the text box summarise the information. This can be presented in table form, if appropriate, that clearly shows the different items over the application period (up to 7 years). Alternatively, the information can be presented in an attachment.

Residential ratepayers on minimum			
Year	Minimum	% on minimum	Number on minimum
2024/25	\$715	77%	28,577
2025/26	\$1,200	79%	29,234
2026/27	\$1,548	79%	29,234

Business ratepayers on minimum

Year	Minimum	% on minimum	Number on minimum
2024/25	\$715	34%	1,172
2025/26	\$1,400	39%	1,385
2026/27	\$1,806	39%	1,385

5.2 What will be the impact on ratepayers of the proposed increase in minimum rates?

In the text box set out the increase in dollar and percentage terms for each category and subcategory of ratepayers affected by the proposed MR increase. This can be presented in table form, if appropriate, that shows category breakdowns of ratepayers (e.g. minimum ratepayers and ad valorem ratepayers) over the application period (up to 7 years). Alternatively, the information can be presented in an attachment.

Category	2024/25 \$	2025/26 \$	2025/26 % increase	2026/27 \$	2026/27 % increase
Residential minimum	\$715	\$1,200	67.83%	\$1,548	29%
Residential ad-valorem	\$0.061337	\$0.0903066	47.23%	0.1164955	29%
Business minimum	\$715	\$1,400	95.80%	\$1,806	29%
Business ad-valorem	\$0.43413	\$0.6867763	58.20%	0.8859415	29%

It should be noted that the proposed minimums include the value of current special levies which are to be consolidated into the ordinary rates. Taking this into consideration, the actual 2025/26 increase is less than the percentages contained within the table above. For example, minimum residential rate payers pay an average of \$97 in levies per year, which would be incorporated into proposed \$1,200 minimum for 2025/26, meaning that the total increase would be less than the 67.83% represented above.

5.3 How does the proposed increase affect the distribution of the rating burden among ratepayers?

In the text box explain the action, if any, the council took in response to feedback from the community.

As North Sydney expects to see a greater proportion of residential apartment developments, it is proposing to increase minimum rates to ensure services can be extended to these new developments, while not disproportionately increasing the rates burden to single house dwellings and ensuring longer term financial sustainability.

Currently 61% of residential rate revenue comes from minimums and 39% from ad valorem. Following the increase in the minimum rate this will be 65% from minimums and 35% from ad valorem.

Currently 4% of business rate revenue comes from minimums and 96% from ad valorem. Following the increase in the minimum rate this will be 5% from minimums and 95% from ad valorem.

5.4 How has the council considered affordability and the affected ratepayers' capacity to pay higher rates, including measures to address hardship?

In the text box explain how the council considered whether the rate increases would be affordable for the affected ratepayers, including any socioeconomic data referred to in making its assessment, and any measures the council proposes to use to reduce the impact, if necessary.

An independent analysis of the community's capacity to pay was undertaken. This is attached to the application and found that there is significant advantage across the LGA, with some slightly increased disadvantage within the suburb of Kirribilli, although this is still much lower than Greater Sydney averages and the level of advantage within this suburb is still in the top 2% of suburbs across Australia. Due to the high levels of advantage and relatively low potential for mortgage and rental stress, in addition to comparably low levels of pensioners and individuals requiring core assistance, it is considered that there is capacity to pay across all groupings in North Sydney.

Council offers a \$250 pensioner concession on rates if a ratepayer holds a pensioner concession card or Seniors Health Care Card and the property is a sole or principal residence.

Council will also review its financial Hardship Policy, which sets out how Council can assist ratepayers who are experiencing difficulty in paying rates on time. Dependent on certain circumstances, the policy allows Council to write-off interest charges accrued.

Council will advertise this hardship policy when communicating with the community on the SV progress.

Table 2 Criterion 2 attachments

Attachment number	Name of document	Page references
Attachment 1	Long Term Financial Plan	Page 19 - 21
Attachment 7	Capacity to pay analysis	Page 25
Attachment 29	Hardship Policy	All

6 Criterion 3 – Consultation on the proposal

Criterion 3 in the MR Guidelines requires IPART to assess applications in light of the consultation the council has undertaken to obtain the community's views on the proposal.

The criterion requires IPART to make an assessment on the council's consultation with its community about the proposal to increase minimum rates.

Although this criterion does not specify the various aspects of how the council should conduct consultation on the minimum rate increases, IPART expects that councils should be able to offer evidence to demonstrate that its consultation has been effective. Councils need to use appropriate methods to make the community aware of the proposal and afford ratepayers opportunities to provide feedback and show that the proposed increase is reflected in its IP&R documents.

The breadth and depth of the consultation should be commensurate with the size of the proposed increase in rates and tailored to the specific circumstances of the minimum rate increase, including whether or not it is part of a proposed SV.

IPART expects that the consultation would:

- include the broader community as well as the ratepayers directly affected
- explain the rationale for the proposal, and
- transparently outline:
 - how the proposed minimum rate increase incorporates the rate peg and/or SV percentage increase
 - the annual increase (rather than just a weekly amount)
 - the full cumulative increase in percentage terms, and the total increase in dollar terms for ratepayers in each affected rating category
 - the impact on other ratepayers in the category who do not pay the minimum rate
 - any change in the proportion of ratepayers on the minimum rate.

For councils also applying for an SV, it is not sufficient to only communicate the proposed average rates (i.e. ad-valorem or base rate + ad-valorem) in the council's community consultation materials. IPART would also expect to see evidence that the council has communicated the proposed minimum rates to ratepayers in dollar terms.

Councils are strongly encouraged to review section 4 of IPART's [Guidance Booklet - Special variations: How to prepare and apply](#), in particular for information about community awareness and engagement for special variations and minimum rates.

How to respond for Criterion 3

The response for this criterion should demonstrate that the council used an appropriate range of methods to inform the community about the proposed increase to minimum rates and offered opportunities for the community to provide their comments on the proposal.

Where applicable, councils should provide references to their IP&R documents dealing with the proposal to increase minimum rates to demonstrate how the criterion has been met.

In the **text box**, the council should explain the consultation process, including:

- how the council has consulted with the community
- the forms of consultation used
- when consultation occurred
- which groups were consulted
- opportunities for the community to give feedback
- a summary of the outcomes and feedback received
- any action taken, or which will be taken, to address issues of common concern within the community about the proposal to increase minimum rates.

If the increase to minimum rates is in conjunction with a proposed SV, the response for criterion 3 should focus on the aspects directly relevant to the proposed MR increase.

6.1 How did the council consult the community about the proposed increases to minimum rates?

a. What were the consultation methods used to make ratepayers aware of the proposal and provide opportunities for feedback from them?

As per the Community Engagement Outcomes Report, Council undertook a comprehensive engagement process using the following consultation methods:

- Council established an online SRV community engagement page which provided a wide range of information at yoursay.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/srv. The site can be read in a range of languages, including all the languages other than English most used within the North Sydney local government area. The site went live on 27 November 2024.
- A community survey was hosted online, via the engagement website.
- Comments were able to be submitted via the website, as well as submissions via email and post.
- Two community information sessions were held – one online and one face to face session.
- A factsheet called 'SRV Factsheet' was sent by mail in December 2024 to a total of 44,100 people in the LGA including households, businesses and non-resident ratepayers.
- Council emailed a total of 6,310 people during the engagement period. This included 770 individuals from the Next Ten Years engagement (75.83% open rate), 1,911 Council e-newsletter subscribers (66.5% open rate), 3,359 events e-newsletter subscribers (56.26% open rate), and over 270 precinct e-newsletter subscribers (58.5%+ open rates).

- A six-post social media campaign focused on raising awareness about the proposal, and encouraging the community to attend the online and in-person community forums, and to provide their feedback.
- A media release was sent to 33 local media contacts on 27 November 2024, and the story was covered by four media outlets, and discussed on two radio stations.
- Printed advertisements ran in the Mosman Daily and North Shore Times on 5 December 2024 and 2 January 2025.
- The SRV proposal was advertised in The Living Collective, including a social media post in the North Sydney Living group on 28 November and an e-newsletter inclusion on 5 December.
- Advertisements were displayed on bus shelters and a billboard from 28 November 2024 to 10 January 2025.
- Council included a promotional email signature from 28 November to 6 December and 6 January to 10 January.
- Posters were displayed on 60 community noticeboards throughout the LGA.
- A workshop was held with 42 demographically selected residents from the LGA.
- A Precinct Committee Forum was attended by 18 representatives from 12 of the 17 active Precincts. The Mayor also spoke about the SRV at four individual Precinct Committee meetings: Lavender Bay (44 attendees), Milson (38 attendees), Wollstonecraft (80 attendees), and Willoughby Bay (32 attendees). Council's CEO presented to the Wollstonecraft precinct.
- An "on hold" message on Council's customer service phonenumber encouraged callers to visit the engagement website for more information.
- An information video was added to the Your Say website to enhance accessibility and clearly communicate key details to the community.

b. What was the consultation period?

27 November 2024 to 10 January 2025.

c. Which groups in the community were consulted?

Stakeholder groups that were consulted are identified below. These groupings are not mutually exclusive, that is, individuals may fall into a number of different stakeholder groups. For example, individuals who own multiple properties in the LGA may be both resident ratepayers and landlord ratepayers.

Stakeholder group	Who is in the group	Specific considerations
Resident ratepayers	Homeowners who are residents of the LGA	Proposed rate increases will be directly incurred by these stakeholders, although these costs may be passed on if the property is rented.
Residential renters	Renters who are residents of the LGA	It will be a decision of the landlord on whether and when any rate increases are passed on to renters.
Business ratepayers	Business property owners within the LGA	Proposed rate increases will be directly incurred by these stakeholders, although these costs may be passed on if the property is rented. Rates are generally a business expense to this category of ratepayer.
Business renters	Business who rent property in the LGA	Similar to residential renters, it will be the decision for the landlords to pass the increase cost of the rate increase on to these businesses. Rent can be a business expense.
Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) members	Residents and business operators with CALD backgrounds	Culturally and linguistically diverse community members will require the option to have information presented in their preferred language.
Community stakeholder groups	Members of community groups that engage with Council	These community-led groups have a direct interest in their members/ residents and therefore, they need to understand why Council is proposing an SRV.

d. How were the proposed changes to minimum rates presented to the community?

Council presented the proposed increase to minimum rates to the community as an annual dollar increase over up to three financial years. The increase would begin by increasing in 2025-26 to \$1,300 for residential properties and \$1,400 for businesses and would then increase by the approved rate path in following years (either the approved SV option or rate peg). Council highlighted that 77% of residents pay the minimum rate and that infrastructure, environmental and main street levies, which are currently charged in addition to the minimum rate, would be consolidated into rates under the SV proposal.

These proposed changes were outlined on Council's YourSay webpage yoursay.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/srv and in the Special Rate Variation Factsheet, which was distributed to all ratepayers.

The proposed changes to minimum rates were also outlined at the online and in-person SV community forums, during which participants had the chance to have their questions answered. Council also drew attention to them with a social media post that had 1,145 views on Facebook and 1,739 views on Instagram, directing people to the YourSay webpage for more information.

e. What feedback from the community was received?

Feedback from the community engagement on the increase to minimum rates was mixed.

In the online survey, 60% of respondents did not express a view on the minimum rate increase, 7% agreed and 32% disagreed. Based on the submissions provided, this response seems to largely stem from survey respondents' concerns around the delivery of the North Sydney Olympic Pool project and the past management of Council's finances, rather than the proposed increase to minimum rates.

The demographically selected workshop was asked about the increase to minimum rates. The group was asked to score the proposed increase in minimum rates from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). An average score of 3.5 was received from the group indicating a willingness to increase minimum rates.

f. How the council responded to any issues of concern raised in feedback from the community.

Council staff responded to queries and questions in person, via email, online and through the community presentation sessions. As questions were provided to Council, 34 frequently asked questions with detailed responses were posted on the SV website, including 2 specifically on minimum rates.

In response to community feedback that a \$1,300 residential minimum was too high for year one, Council deferred some projects from year one and will seek \$10m additional loan funding to reduce the year one residential minimum to \$1,200.

Table 3 Criterion 3 Attachments

Attachment number	Name of document	Page references
Attachment 3	Community Engagement Outcomes report	Page 6, Page 27

7 Other relevant matters

The MR Guidelines provide that we will assess each application based on its merits against the 3 assessment criteria and any other matters we consider relevant. The MR Guidelines do not specify examples of such matters.

Consistent with the approach for assessing SV applications, IPART's approach will be to assess each of the 3 criteria, then make an overall assessment taking into account any other relevant factors.

In the text box the council may provide information in addition to that provided elsewhere in the application which it would like to be considered when assessing the proposed increase to minimum rate(s).

N/A

Table 4 Attachments for other relevant matters

Attachment number	Name of document	Page references

8 Council certification and contact information



8.1 Certification of application

Councils must submit a declaration in the specified form. It should be completed by the General Manager and the Responsible Accounting Officer. Prepare a document in the form indicated below, sign, scan and attach as a public supporting document.

To be completed by General Manager and Responsible Accounting Officer

Name of the council:	North Sydney Council
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We certify that to the best of our knowledge the information provided in this application is correct and complete.

General Manager (name):	Therese Cole
Signature and Date:	 10 February 2025
Responsible Accounting Officer (name):	Aigul Utegenova
Signature and Date:	 10 February 2025



Note: These signatures will be redacted before publication of the application.

8.2 Council contact information

IPART's formal contact with the council will be with the General Manager.

During the assessment period, IPART officers are likely to contact the council with detailed queries about the application and supporting documents. Councils should provide direct contact details of the primary contact for such inquiries where this person is a council officer who is not the General Manager. Council officer contact details will be redacted before publication of this application.

General Manager

General Manager contact phone	
General Manager contact email	

Note: These contact details will be redacted before publication of the application.

Primary council contact

Council contact phone	[REDACTED]
Council contact email	[REDACTED]
Council email for inquiries about the MR application	[REDACTED]

Note: These contact details will be redacted before publication of the application.

Secondary council contact

Council contact phone	[REDACTED]
Council contact email	[REDACTED]
Council email for inquiries about the MR application	[REDACTED]

Note: These contact details will be redacted before publication of the application.

9 List of attachments

Table 5 is a checklist such that all relevant documents are submitted to IPART.

Some documents are mandatory for all councils to submit, while others are only applicable if required by the council's specific circumstances and application. Each council can determine which other supporting materials to attach. To assist councils, Table 5 includes the names of some supporting documents commonly provided.

If the increase to minimum rates is in conjunction with a proposed SV, councils should include in the List of attachments all documents relied on in the application and referred to in Tables 1-4.

Complete the List of attachments, adding rows as necessary:

- name each document.
- check the box to indicate that it is being submitted with the application.

IPART will publish on our website the Application Forms and all material submitted as attachments to the application (unless it is marked confidential).

Table 5 List of attachments to the council's application

Name of Attachment	The document is included	The document is not applicable	The document was attached with the SV Part B Application Form
Mandatory forms/attachments (i.e. to be published on IPART's website):			
Application Form Part A (Excel spreadsheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Application Form Part B (this Word document)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Council resolution to apply for the for the minimum rate increase	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed certification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delivery Program	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Long Term Financial Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation materials	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community feedback (including surveys and results if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	NA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Willingness to pay study (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hardship Policy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other public supporting materials:			
(List the documents)			
Confidential supporting material (i.e. not to be published on IPART's website):			
(List the documents)			

Name of Attachment	The document is included	The document is not applicable	The document was attached with the SV Part B Application Form

Important information

Submitting online

Applications must be submitted through IPART's [LG Portal](#) by 11:59pm on Monday, 3 February 2025. Councils should note a file size limit of 150MB applies to any individual document uploaded in the portal.

It is not necessary to submit a duplicate copy of a document with the MR Increase Application Form if the council has submitted the same document as an attachment to its SV Application Form.

Confidential content

IPART will publish all applications (excluding confidential content) on our website. Examples of confidential content are those parts of a document which disclose the personal identity or other personal information pertaining to a member of the public, a document such as a council working document that does not have formal status, or document which includes commercial-in-confidence content.

Councils should ensure supporting documents are redacted to remove confidential content where possible, or clearly marked as **CONFIDENTAL**.

Publishing the council's application

Councils should also publish their application on their own website for the community to access.