

1 Susan Street, P.O. Box 118 Auburn, NSW Australia 1835

Telephone: 9735 1222 Facsimile: 9643 1120  
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*In reply quote:* L-29-05/02

Dr Peter Boxall  
Chairman  
Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal  
Level 8  
1 Market Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

*Contact Name:* H McNulty - 97351222

*TRIM No:*

21 July 2015

Dear Dr Boxall,

**SUBJECT: AUBURN CITY COUNCIL SUBMISSION ON PARRAMATTA CITY  
COUNCIL'S ALTERNATIVE FIT FOR THE FUTURE PROPOSAL**

Auburn Council strongly objects to Parramatta City Council's Alternative Fit for the Future Proposal which has been submitted to IPART along with its Council Improvement Proposal. This proposal suggests that large parts of the Auburn City Council be incorporated into a new larger Council centred on the existing Parramatta Council area.

This plan to cherry pick parts of Auburn City as well as parts of Hornsby and Ryde Councils has been prepared without any consultation and arguably with very little analysis of the benefits and costs of the proposal. It also stands in stark contrast to the comments made by Parramatta City Council in its Council Improvement Proposal where it states: "We note that Hornsby Shire Council on 10 June 2015 resolved to expand its boundaries in Epping and Carlingford to incorporate existing Parramatta City Council areas. Parramatta City Council notes that no analysis or justification was provided to underpin these proposed boundary changes and Parramatta City Council rejects this proposition." It appears that Parramatta Council has taken the same path for which it criticises Hornsby Council.

The Alternative Proposal submitted by Parramatta Council has very little analysis to justify its conclusions and appears to be based on selective excerpts from documents such as the NSW Government's Metropolitan Strategy – A Plan for Growing Sydney. The proposal attempts to justify the inclusion of a large part of Auburn City Council by referring to Direction 1.3 of the strategy – Establish a new priority growth area – Parramatta Council to the Olympic Peninsula and Action 1.3.1 – Establish a new partnership to manage renewal of the Greater Parramatta to Olympic Peninsula Priority Growth Area.

While the Metropolitan Strategy recognises that this new priority growth area requires a partnership between the State Government, local government, industry and the community, Parramatta Council's submission seems to suggest that the outcome can be facilitated simply by annexing large parts of the Auburn local government area.

The Alternative Proposal does not comply with the State Government's Fit for the Future Guidelines which require that any proposal involving changes to current Council boundaries include the written approval of all Councils involved.

The Proposal also fails to recognise the difficulty of dealing with the remainder of Auburn City and the problems that splitting the area in the manner proposed will cause. Auburn City Council has seen no evidence that carving up communities will deliver benefits to anybody.

The unilateral approach adopted by Parramatta Council is in stark contrast to the constructive and cooperative approach adopted by Auburn Council and its merger partners City of Canada Bay and Burwood Councils.

Contrary to the approach adopted by Parramatta Council in the preparation of its Alternative Proposal, the Voluntary Merger Proposal submitted by Auburn City, Burwood and the City of Canada Bay Councils is based on a rigorous business case and supporting assessments. Included in these assessments is a report prepared by SGS Economics and Planning on the Urban Structure of Auburn. This report examined functional linkages between Auburn and Parramatta and between Auburn and its neighbouring Councils to the east – that is Burwood Canada Bay and Strathfield. This report found that Auburn has stronger linkages with its neighbouring Councils to the east than with Parramatta.

The result of the SGS study is entirely consistent with the outcomes of the community consultation undertaken by Auburn Council which has consistently shown that the Auburn community have a very strong preference for a merger with Burwood and the City of Canada Bay Councils over a merger with Parramatta Council.

Auburn City Council has attached to this submission a copy of a letter forwarded to Parramatta city Council on 26 June 2015 outlining its concerns about the Alternative Proposal.

The Voluntary Merger Proposal submitted by Auburn, Burwood and the City of Canada Bay Councils presents a compelling case for this merger which is backed by thorough analysis. The proposal meets all of the Government's seven benchmarks by 2020 and delivers the scale and capacity required for the future.

Auburn City Council therefore requests that IPART rejects the Alternative Proposal submitted by Parramatta City Council and recommends to the State Government that the Voluntary Merger Proposal proposed by Auburn, Burwood and the City of Canada Bay Councils be accepted.

Yours faithfully,

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**HAMISH MCNULTY**  
**DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER DIRECT SERVICES**



# AUBURN CITY COUNCIL

MANY CULTURES ONE COMMUNITY

1 Susan Street, P.O. Box 118 Auburn, NSW Australia 1835

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In reply quote: L-29-05/02

Mr Greg Dyer  
Chief Executive Officer  
Parramatta City Council  
P.O Box 32  
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Contact Name: M Brisby - 97351222

TRIM No:

26 June 2015

Dear Greg,

**SUBJECT: PARRAMATTA CITY COUNCIL - FIT FOR THE FUTURE PROPOSAL**

I am writing to express Auburn City Council's surprise and disappointment at the alternative Fit for the Future proposal prepared by Parramatta City Council for submission to IPART.

Auburn Council has been concerned throughout the Fit for the Future process that Parramatta Council had never publicly expressed a position on the initiative. We were therefore very shocked to learn of this proposal through the media at the very end of the process. Auburn Council willingly participated in some early discussions with Parramatta and Holroyd Councils focussed on joint services. We declined however to contribute to a consultancy which was to be commissioned without a formal procurement process and which was to be undertaken by a consultant who was not a member of the Government's approved panel.

Parramatta's plan to 'cherry-pick' parts of Auburn City has been done without consultation and will be forcefully opposed. The plan has also been devised without regard to the other part of Auburn City. In so far as it relates to the residents of Auburn City, Parramatta's proposal is without merit and has no support in our community. There is no evidence that carving up communities will deliver benefits to anybody.

The unilateral approach adopted by Parramatta is in stark contrast to the consensus reached between merger partners Auburn, Burwood and Canada Bay Councils. This collaborative effort will deliver a merger proposal that meets all the State Government's 'Fit for the Future' benchmarks and is reflective of the aspirations of our communities.

It is important to note that the takeover proposal by Parramatta City Council does not comply with the State Government's Fit for The Future Guidelines. It is Auburn Council's understanding that any proposal involving changes to current Council boundaries requires the written approval of the Councils involved. The Parramatta Council proposal does not meet this requirement.

I formally request that a copy of this letter be included in the Parramatta Council submission to IPART.

Yours faithfully,

**MARK BRISBY**  
**General Manager**