

From: Shirley Pearson [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 25 February 2015 8:56 AM
To: IPART Mailbox
Subject: Objection: Ashfield Municipal Council Special Rate Variation

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

To whom it may concern

Reference: Your say, Your Future

I strongly object to any special rate variation and request IPART reject Ashfield Council's application for a special rate variation.

I have been living in Ashfield for almost 20 years and over the last few years I can only commend what the council have been doing.

1. The Ashfield area itself (aka Trashfield) has slowly but noticeably become cleaner and tidier. It may even be able to lose its moniker at some time in the future. The incidence of abandoned shopping trolleys has reduced extraordinarily; household waste dumping has also dropped, and the speed of its removal by council increased. There is still much work to do to educate certain parts of our demographic about how easy (and cheap) it is for waste to be taken away by council, but progress in the right direction has been impressive.

2. Whatever the quid pro quo, not only has Ashfield Park been ring-fenced from Westconnex, but improvements to the children's playground and the park environment have been truly wonderful. (A tree stump carved and then painted into an aboriginal motif with serpent, and only this morning, while on my morning walk, many (more) trees being planted. Yea!)

3. Work and plans to improve the Ashfield shopping area and precinct continue. As Liverpool Rd runs through our 'Main St', this will always be an ongoing challenge but I can see things are changing for the better.

4. We're told that Ashfield Council has been doing this well within its budget and its fiscal management praised.

BUT NOW...

they want to increase our rates, and from the bump distributed to ratepayers and residents (who will be affected by rent increases), primarily to improve the swimming pool which is used by a small proportion of the Ashfield municipality (and probably a similar number from outside the Municipality not paying rates!). This at a time not only when the number of ratepayers is going to increase exponentially (unit-building construction in the area is quite frankly frenetic) but when rates are bound to increase as land rates from the increasingly popular Inner West rise (my municipality already includes the much sought after garden and harbour suburb of Haberfield and gentrified

village of Summer Hill). When I first moved to Ashfield, there was a 3 storey limit on units which I rather liked as it maintained a relatively low inner-city density. But several years ago, that model was thrown out of the window and although I may not like it, it was a necessity born out of a need for more housing (albeit private), and by placing them near rail stations, to encourage people to use public not private transport. It is hard to disagree with either of these reasons.

Therefore, from what they have achieved with the current rates, to the additional rates they are going to get in the future, I earnestly request that you reject their application for a special rate variation.

Yours faithfully

Shirley Pearson

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