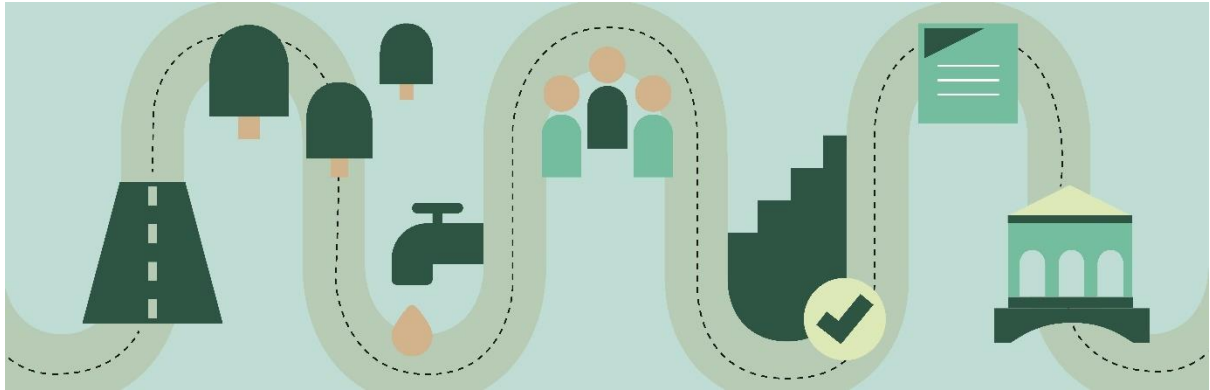


# INNER WEST



Engagement outcomes report  
*Making rates fairer across the  
Inner West.*

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# Summary

The engagement purpose was to inform and seek feedback from the community about proposed changes to the rating structure including establishment of a new minimum rate, due to rates harmonisation as required by the State Government.

The engagement period was 15 December 2020 to 7 February 2021. The community could provide feedback through an online form at [Your Say Inner West](#) Council's engagement platform, writing to Council, via phone call to an Engagement specialist for people without computer access, or who required translation or accessibility support.

The project generated a high level of interest with 6,979 visitors to the project page, 806 document downloads, 1693 online comment forms and twenty-eight submissions via email and letter from individuals, organisations and companies. There were also 11,378 page visits to the rates calculator page on Council's website

## High level results

The online form consisted of three mandatory questions about the proposals, space to comment and questions about the submitter.

Q1 – Overall, do you support the proposed new rates structure?

- Yes - 310
- No - 1285
- Don't know – 105

Q2 – Do you support the proposed minimum residential rate of \$850?

- Yes - 409
- No - 1016
- Don't know – 283

Q3 – Do you support the proposed minimum business rate of \$820?

- Yes - 325
- No - 647
- Don't know – 738

Community comments were analysed and themed. There were 10 themes:

1. Unfair/don't understand
2. Services
3. Hardship
4. Method
5. Amalgamation
6. Council finances
7. Information
8. Fair
9. Phasing
10. Former Councils

Most respondents were residential ratepayers while 46 business ratepayers made submissions.

Most respondents were from the former Marrickville Council (1144) compared to former Leichhardt (335) and former Ashfield (186)

## Background

Inner West Council has three rates structures, a legacy from pre-amalgamation: the former Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Council rates structures. Rates harmonisation means there will be a new rating structure for the whole Inner West. Rates will be paid more equitably by all ratepayers in the Inner West in proportion to land value.

Inner West Council, along with all amalgamated councils, is required by law to harmonise rates from 1 July 2021. As Inner West is proposing a new minimum rate, it must apply to IPART for approval.

Inner West Council engaged with the community to inform and seek feedback on its proposal including the new minimum rate, to inform the elected Council's decision and to meet the criteria for IPART assessment.

The goals of the engagement were

- To create awareness across multiple channels, ensure ratepayers could obtain specific information about the impact on them and provide a range of methods for the community to provide their views
- To explain the need for change and the proposed structure to affected rate payers, including the
  - rationale for increasing minimum rates above the statutory amount
  - level of the proposed minimum rates
  - number and proportion of ratepayers that will be on the minimum rates, by rating category or sub-category
  - Rate levels that would apply without the proposed minimum rate
- To support ratepayers who speak languages other than English or have a disability to participate

## Engagement methods

The community could provide feedback:

- Online via [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates)
- Email and post
- Via phone to an Engagement specialist

The community could also ask questions of a specialist rates team member via email or phone.

# Promotion

The project was promoted widely through the following methods:

- [Hardcopy flyer](#) distributed to every business and residential ratepayer and available for download at [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates)
- Email flyer to those who receive rates notice via email
- Letter to Shopping Centres from Chief Financial Officer
- Email to local Business Chambers from Economic Development Manager

The flyer and fact sheet are attached at the end of this report.

## Online channels

Project page on Council's engagement hub [www.yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au](http://www.yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au) <https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates> with online comment form, link to rates calculator, assistance methods, project stages, translation services, translated material, downloadable flyer and factsheets, important links and key dates.

View the downloadable [Factsheet](#) from Your Say Inner West

View the downloadable [Flyer](#)

## Translated information

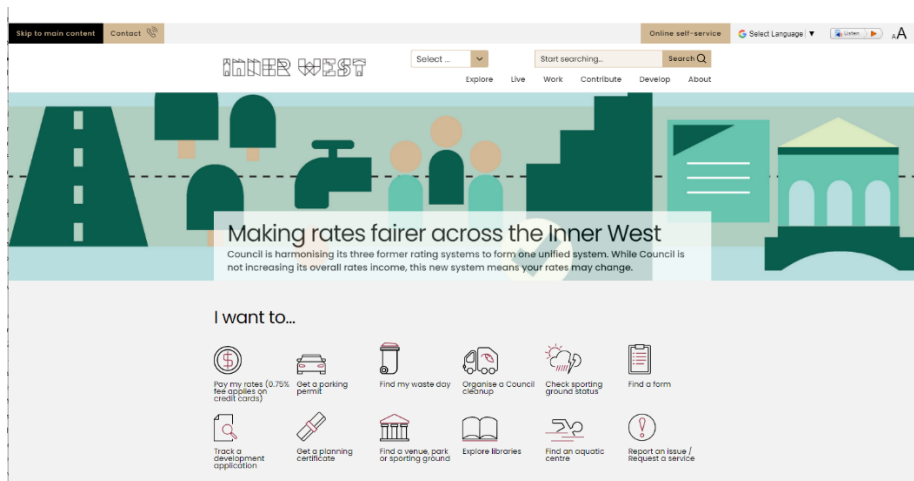
- Flyer and fact sheet available for download from Your Say Inner West in top five community languages
- Translating and Interpreting Service promoted on the project page in top five community languages: Chinese Simplified, Traditional Chinese, Italian, Greek and Vietnamese.

The flyer and factsheet were translated into our top five community languages. The table below shows the downloads of translated materials.

## Community languages downloads

Language	Flyer	Factsheet
Chinese Simplified	11	28
Traditional Chinese	3	4
Italian	3	15
Greek	2	7
Vietnamese	1	9

## Council's corporate website home page



We provided an online rates calculator so property owners could calculate how their property could be affected under the proposals

[Visit the Your Say website to find out more](#)

Submissions close 7 February 2021.

## Use the calculator to see an estimate of how your general rates may change

The amounts do not include waste and stormwater charges or pensioner rebates/discounts.

Please note most addresses are not mixed developments and will display as 100%. If your address is a mixed development, your rates will display as two separate entries: one for business and one for residential.

Search for your property address:

Clear

## Your Say Inner West monthly e-news update December 2020

Thursday 17 December 2020

### Thank you for your feedback in 2020



Thank you to everyone who contributed to Your Say Inner West projects this year. Your input into our decision making is appreciated.

The Engagement team wishes you a Merry Christmas and look forward to hearing from you again in 2021.

### Open for comment

**Making rates fairer in Inner West**  
closing 7 February



**Improving pedestrian safety**  
closing 22 December



## Council's e-news Thursday 4 February 2021

**Nominations are open for 2021  
Women's Honour Roll**



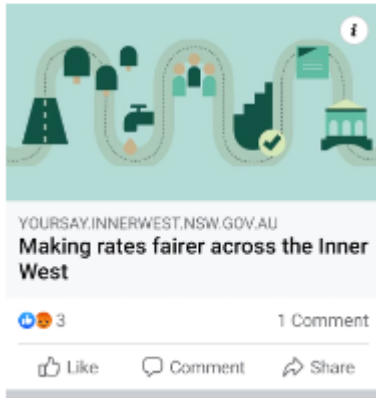
**Making rates fairer across the  
Inner West - Have your say**



## Social media – Facebook post

Inner West Council has been operating under three different rating systems.

Now, by law, amalgamated councils must harmonise rates from July 2021.... See More



- Local digital media

[City Hub 19 January 2021](#)

[Sydney Morning Herald 18 January 2021](#)

## How we assisted the community to access information and provide comment

Council provided several methods to assist the community to access and submit feedback to this engagement.

- Dedicated email address [myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au](mailto:myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au) – 57
- Dedicated phone line - 203
- Council staff call back service to help community complete feedback form – one call
- National Relay Service information for people who have a hearing or speech impairment were provided on the project page at [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates) – 0
- Translating and Interpreter Service (TIS) - 0

## Enquiries

Contact Council's Rates Information line on 02 9392 5859 8.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Friday or email [myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au](mailto:myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au). Please note the line and email will not be staffed between 12.30pm 24 December 2020 and 8.30am 4 January 2021.

## Need assistance?

If you'd like a hard copy form posted to you or help filling the online form contact Renata Krchnakova – Engagement Officer on 9392 5501 or Annie Coulthard – Senior Engagement Specialist on 9392 5328.

### **If you have a hearing or speech impairment:**

Contact us on the [National Relay Service](#) you will need to provide Inner West Council's Rates Information Line on 02 9392 5859

These services operate Monday to Friday 9am–4pm on these numbers:

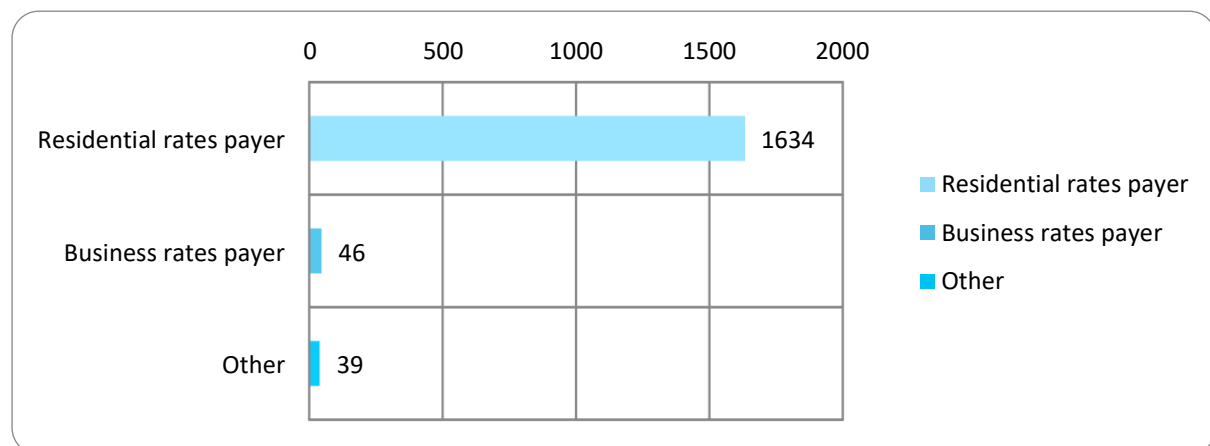
- Voice Relay number: 1300 555 727
- TTY number: 133 677
- SMS relay number: 0423 677 767

## Engagement outcomes

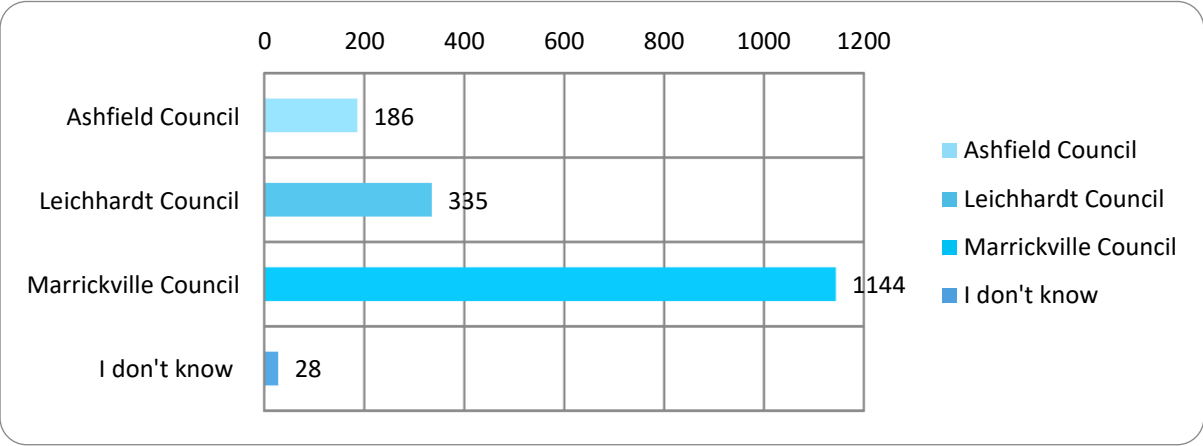
Below are the detailed responses received online.

### Who did we hear from?

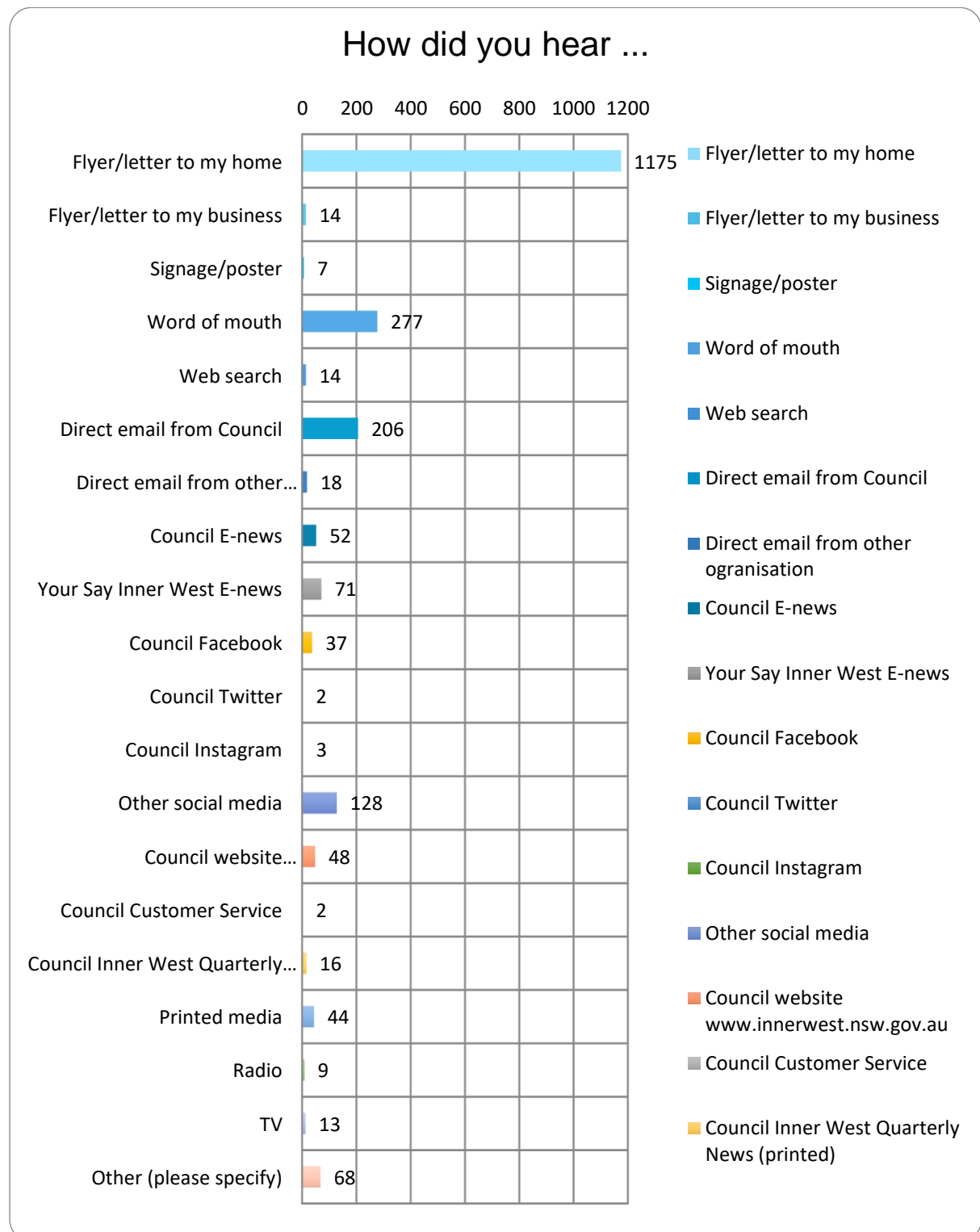
### Which best describes you?



**In which former Council area is your property located?**



## How did you hear about this engagement?

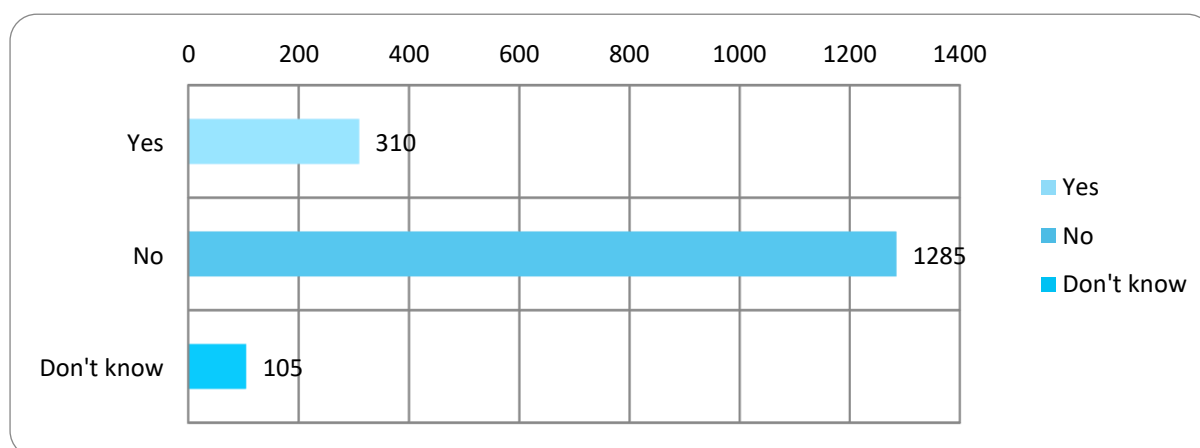


## What did they say?

### Notes

1. Copies of all comments and written submissions received (with personal details redacted) can be found in the appendices.
2. There are slightly more responses than submitters, because a small number of submitters mistakenly gave more than one answer to that question.
3. There are some instances where submissions were received from the same email address or where people submitted again with additions to their initial submission. Also, the content of some submissions appears to be replicated from a 'form letter'. These have all been included in the count for transparency.

### Overall, do you support the proposed new rates structure?



Number of submitters who mistakenly selected more than one option - seven.

### There were 10 themes to the comments.

#### Theme 1 – UNFAIR/DON'T UNDERSTAND (886 comments)

(Inequitable; paying more for less or the same service not acceptable; I don't understand; does not make sense; percentage increase is too great; no satisfactory explanation; poorer suburbs subsidising wealthier suburbs)

#### Indicative comments:

- I am being charged a 20% increase in my rates, for no changes in service. This is an excessive increase in rates, and the harmonisation policy should not be about subsidising other council areas who were charging more than my previous council.
- Why should I pay more for council rates when the services will not change? Why I should I subsidise people who live far away from me, just because they have inefficient or expensive services? It is not fair.
- This is not fair. I live in a studio and my rates are going up almost 25%
- I am in a block of 4 townhouses in a 3 bed unit and although my rates will decrease by \$8 my neighbours (in 2 bed units) will increase by \$164 pa BUT my neighbours in 3 and 4 bedroom houses on full blocks either side of us will decrease by \$80 - their properties are valued more than my unit. I cannot see how this is fair and equitable at all !
- My rates will go up by 25%. What a joke!!!! I have never heard of such a sudden and hyper-extraordinary increase in government charges in my life! How do s this fair?
- it is obvious that there is to be a transference of rates liability from wealthier owners to less wealthy owners. This is a disgrace.
- We own a shop on new canterbury rd petersham and the change in rates is 22% higher, how can we continue with these rises and pandemics. 'NOT FAIR' Inner West Council

## **Theme 2 – SERVICES (443 comments)**

(Services - no increase in services - not good value for services - services poor - services reduced since amalgamation - no value or benefit for increase)

Indicative comments:

- This increase in rates (for me) comes with a decrease in council service - worse rubbish collection (missed collections, harder time to leave bins out meaning bins left out longer), poorer amenities (weeds everywhere, grass along verges constantly over grown). Our area looks dreadful
- This unfairly impacts landowners closer to the city where values are higher. Will there be an increase in services for people paying hundreds more?
- Since the amalgamation services have dropped, streets are dirty and not swept, verges not mowed. The services we had for much less rates when we were part of Marrickville Council is now massively eroded.
- My rates go up a whopping 25%! That is ridiculous even aside from considering that the service level has been dropping so significantly recently.
- I will support it only if the council spends the money in our street on all services and not just picking up the bins every week. fix the foot paths, trim the trees at the top and at the bottom so i don't have to bend over to walk along the paths. We are the forgotten corner that joins up with Burwood council.
- Where are the additional benefits other than taking more money from us? Our rates will increase by \$300 p/a and you can't even mow the nature strips more than twice a year the whole suburb looks like it's been abandoned. Previous Marrickville council did in monthly. Calls to your line goes nowhere.
- I do not think the rates should be increased in St Peters, since the amalgamation ,the streets are full of weeds, it is very rare that i see any one weeding or sweeping, the area is filthy, you just have to walk around it to see. Do more work, then think about the rate increase, or employ more staff.
- Since the amalgamation, there has been a decrease in services. My street is filthy, and I am told it is cleaned only every 40 business days(that's every 8 weeks, or 6 times a year at most!)- Leaves, take away containers from restaurants in Enmore road litter the street and obstruct the drains when it rains, leading to flooding. Bins and furniture litter the footpath and you cannot walk past with a pram or walking frame.

## **Theme 3 – HARDSHIP (235 comments)**

(COVID19 - poor timing in a pandemic - people are being priced out of the area - people have low incomes but their property values are rising on paper)

Indicative comments:

- Why is my rates bill going up over \$200 when my income has not increased? Where are rates going down, if your income is staying the same? How is this fair to those of us whose rates are going up in a time when we are in a pandemic, there are no jobs and wages are not increasing?
- My rates are meant to increase by over 10%. Has Council considered the impact Covid has had on people, including landlords like me who have had to reduce my rental significantly. So, my earnings have reduced measurably yet Council sees it fit to increase my costs by a significant margin.
- I will have an increase of approximately \$175 per annum doesn't seem like much but on a fixed Centrelink income every little bit counts.
- I provide low cost housing in Newtown. The increase in Council rate compounds the impost of land tax already imposed by State Government. The rent will barely meet the

annual outgoings. I will be forced to sell the property putting one low income family on the street

- The increases will disadvantage poorer people. This includes the many artists who reside in the Council area, many of whom have suffered from a lack of work in 2020.
- How is this new proposed system equitable if it does not take into consideration the living wages and incomes of everyone within the area. I have lived in this area almost my entire life, now there are people who are moving here and gentrifying the area and making everything cost more and they should be the ones that have to take on these rates.

#### **Theme 4 – METHOD (215 comments)**

(Do not agree with method; land valuation system inappropriate or inequitable; suggestions for differential formulae; minimum rate is too high or too low; apartments should pay more or less; strata issues)

Indicative comments:

- Land value should not be primary determinant of the cost of providing essential services (which is what council rates should be).
- I am Single with big Mortgage unit. I should pay less than somebody in 5 bedroom house with big money!!
- Since your proposed rate structure is intended to be based on land value, then the calculation should be based on purely land value without setting any form of minimum rate. The disparity of treatment is unfair. Your premise of harmonisation has adverse effect on by penalising property of lower land value such as mine and I guess many others, by imposing minimum rate.
- I noted that the level of rates to be paid is still far less than the proportion they should be paying based on Improved Capital Value versus non strata residences.
- Marrickville has different needs to other now included suburbs and should be addressed and managed individually. Rates increase just to match distant suburbs is unfair and unnecessary.
- As an apartment owner the land value is irrelevant to my personal financial situation and the services council provides aren't changing, yet you want to charge me over \$160 more per year - for what?!!
- I understand the need to harmonise but think raising the minimum is the wrong approach. Why not harmonise to the least minima instead?
- Basing the rate structure on information provided by the NSW Valuer almost 2yrs ago (Jul -19) is not a true baseline to establish the current value of the land. My property (and the land on which it sits on) has devalued considerably due to the commencement of the Rozelle Interchange - West Connex project which will be continuing until 2023
- All constituents enjoy the same services and thus should pay the same rates. I think the proposed minimum should be closer to \$1200-1300 per annum

#### **Theme 5 – AMALGAMATION (199 comments)**

(Was supposed to result in cost savings and efficiencies - de-amalgamate - I didn't support amalgamation)

Indicative comments:

- The whole premise of merging councils was to cut down on duplication of roles and responsibilities and make use of economies of scale.
- Merging of council should NOT increase my rates. I should not be punished because of location of my home.

- I thought the amalgamation should result in cost savings, for example, only one payroll department, only one accounting department etc.
- Pre amalgamation, the council did just fine off the current rates structure. Just another reason we were against the amalgamation in the first place.
- You lied to us. My rates are going up 22% under the new structure. When the councils amalgamated we were told it would be more efficient, which implies lower rates not massively higher rates.
- The forced amalgamation by the State Liberal government, of 3 LGAs in to one mega council area, has NOT brought any increased benefits in terms of services, of accessibility to councillors AND to council offices (eg no Marrickville based office now), no financial benefits in fact the opposite, etc etc etc.
- When amalgamated Council's assured the residents that Council rates will remain
- The entire amalgamation project is a completely avoidable disaster. Rates were supposed to go down, not up.

### **Theme 6 – COUNCIL FINANCES (185 comments)**

(Council poor at managing finances - hitting ratepayers to pay for budget deficit - revenue raising - should find savings/efficiencies - other councils rates are less - Council has a surplus - Rates should reduce)

Indicative comments:

- Try reducing some of Council's inefficiencies.
- I have not spoken to 1 person who's rates are actually going down! This is again council revenue raising !!! What an absolute joke!!!! I'm so angry!!
- It would make more sense for Council to first assess its current cost and staffing structure - undertaken by an independent third-party - before seeking to raise rates.
- While our pockets shrink even further, the council profits.
- The proposed new rates structure is an exercise in revenue raising disguised as a project of harmonisation of rates despite the council's claim that it is revenue neutral. Why waste the Council's budget on the significant project cost of harmonisation of rates if it is revenue neutral.
- A fairer proposal would be to decrease higher rated properties to match former Marrickville and for Inner West to become more efficient.
- Council has an \$80 million surplus in 2020 - why isn't this being used to lower rates?
- We believe we should be getting a rate reduction not a rate increase. The Council needs to start working with the Chamber of Commerce and promote the shopping strip or the shopping strip will not survive.
- I want to know more about how the council will get itself out of the debt hole it is in.
- I think council should be looking to reduce given the amount of new developments in the area

### **Theme 7 – INFORMATION (105 comments)**

(Rates calculator confusing or incorrect - language is spin - objecting to consultation at Christmas time - issues with downloading documents or comments on survey questions)

Indicative comments:

- I had to find previous bills to realise that what is referred to in the "calculator" is just part of the Council's charges
- The label it has been given is misleading, inaccurate and obviously been chosen to pacify those who are being unfairly disadvantaged.

- The rates calculator underestimates the current rate level by half. It says that the rates I currently pay are \$710 pa. They are not, I pay \$1,301 pa. How can I trust your calculations?
- How can we gauge how it impacts us if we aren't presented with the whole picture - discounts where applicable, storm water and waste charges.
- My property land value has been over estimated by the Inner West council increasing my rates by \$100 p/a. It has been valued at 1.4 Million . I bought the property in 2014 for 1.23 Million with a 4 bed house on it.
- "Equitable" is a rubbish concept used by the lazy and envious to steal from the smart and industrious. It fools no one outside of the extreme leftist bubble that is the IWC and its activist fellow travellers.
- "Harmonising rates" is such PR garbage - we bought into the area knowing the rates we would need to pay and now this is being ramped up by almost 30%

### **Theme 8 – FAIR (104 comments)**

(Fair - seems fair and consistent - appropriate to have one structure)

Indicative comments:

- In principle, standardising rates would obviously result in efficiencies and cost savings compared to having to maintain different rate calculations across the old council areas
- A much fairer system what a surprise not! that previous Ashfield Council was charging the most for rates and Marrickville Council the least. As a long suffering Ashfield Council resident I say bring it on!! and complete the merger. Stop dragging it out and bring on more equity across all areas of council functions
- It's important to have a consistent rating structure across the entire amalgamated LGA to move forward with equitable expenditure and investment.
- The new formula makes my rates cheaper. Very happy!
- I believe this is fair for all property owners in these council areas. Instead of the council operating on the different old rating systems..which means some people pay more and some less based from these three suburb areas. Though, generally speaking all home owners are using the same consumption of council amenities. Streamlining one rating system is fair for all.
- I am completely support this, I will be happy to know my high rates are not offsetting the lower rates of other areas. We all have access to the same amenities, thus we should be contributing equitably across the LGA!

### **Theme 9 – PHASING (44 comments)**

(Should be phased)

Indicative comments:

- The effect on us is a 20% increase in rates. This is outrageous and if the decision stands, at least it must be phased-in over a reasonable period to spread the rate shock!
- Agree with the concept but my own increase is 23.8% which is significant within a year. Increase should be incremental or capped over a certain timeframe.
- The change to the new structure is too severe for those whose rates will increase. It should be implemented incrementally over a three year period.
- Increases could be phased- a 25% increase is far too high on our already high rates
- You should be phasing in the 'Harmonising' of Rate changes over say a 3 year period.... instead of slugging some with 20% increase and reducing others. Its not our fault there is such a big discrepancy between the old councils.

### **Theme 10 – FORMER COUNCILS (247 comments)**

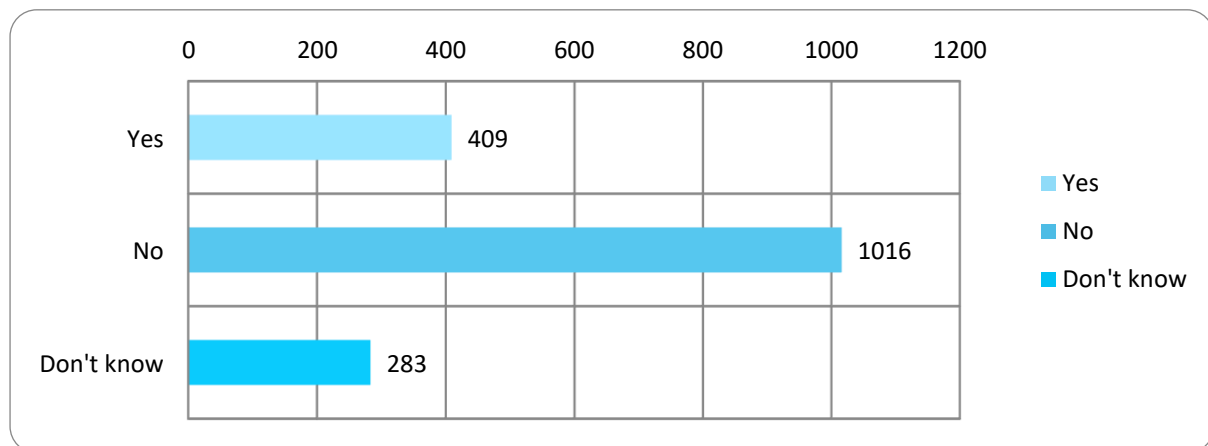
(Former councils better, more efficient, Ashfield rates were too high, SRV; Marrickville ratepayers are subsidising more expensive suburbs; Leichhardt rates were too high)

Indicative comments:

- Many years ago the Ashfield Council increased rates significantly on a temporary basis to pay for the swimming pool. This rate increase never ended and rates have increased forever.
- I lived in Ashfield for 21 years now. The current Council rates has increased to close to \$2000 pa which is a great burden on household budget. I support the proposed new rates structure which will bring it down. (If the rate calculator's calculation is true and correct)
- My rates have been sufficient to provide Marrickville Council with ample operating funds for the last 27 years. This feels unfair and ill thought out.
- Completely unfair to the previous Marrickville council residents. Why should we have to pay more to subsidise the previous Ashfield and Leichhardt Councils when we don't get any better or further services. It shows that Marrickville could provide services without increasing their rates.
- The proposal will result in increased charges, but not services, for the Marrickville area.
- Leichhardt Council's rates were lower than the proposed new minimum, so the question arises as to whether Leichhardt was more efficient in its use of funds than Ashfield and Marrickville.
- The rates were suffocating in Leichhardt before this change
- This confirms that business rate payers in former Leichhardt have been paying above average rates for a considerable time and this ,along with parking restrictions and fines has impacted on the viability of many businesses.

There were also 54 comments categorised as 'other'.

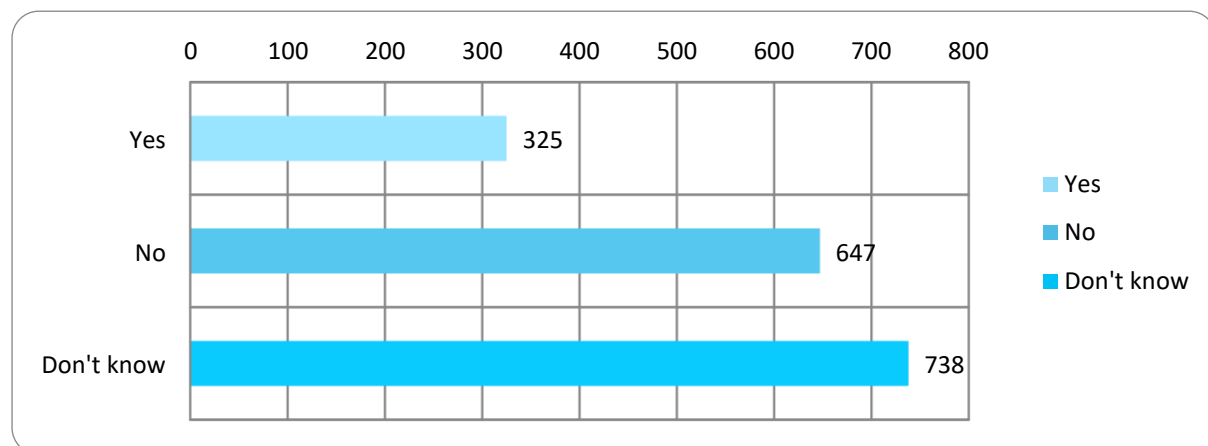
#### Do you support the proposed minimum residential rate of \$850?



Number of submitters who mistakenly selected more than one option - 14.

The comments reflected the above themes.

### Do you support the proposed minimum business rate of \$820?



Number of submitters who mistakenly selected more than one option - 17.

#### Themes:

Unfair, businesses should pay more/same as residential, can't comment as not a business, hardship -business down due to COVID-19, businesses are not paying rent so landlords suffer, minimum should be higher, businesses use more services, business rates are tax deductible and they make money from their land, this will discourage businesses from setting up in the Inner West

#### Indicative comments:

- Seems too low compared to \$850 for residences
- Why are the rates for business less than residents? This is outrageous.
- I would hope this doesn't further discourage businesses from setting up in the Inner West.
- Outrageous when applied to a small factory warehouse of 120 squares with a land value of less than \$38,000 for which Council provides NO special services, not even waste removal.
- It would be good if Council more thoroughly explained why there's a \$40 difference between business and residential rates if the intent is harmonisation and fairness.
- definitely think that businesses should be charged more as they have more rubbish to be disposed off and more maintenance compared to residential properties
- many businesses are really struggling right now. I think Council should try to support its residents and businesses to keep going financially
- Why is the Business Minimum rate lower than the residential when Businesses make money from their land and residents don't?
- That is a lot of money for small businesses

#### Submissions received directly by post or email - 28

- Two from companies in relation to the shopping mall category (1 confidential)
  - JLL on behalf of MarketPlace Leichhardt
    - Opposed on the basis of Shopping Centre Information, Scale of Rate Increase, Impact and Implications of Rate Increase

- Urbis submission on behalf of the Shopping Centre Council of Australia (SCCA), AMP Capital, managers of Marrickville Metro Shopping Centre, and Abacus Property Group, owners and managers of Ashfield Mall (confidential)
- 1 from an organisation – Marrickville Chamber of Commerce
  - Opposed on the basis the proposal is inequitable and unreasonable as it will result in former Leichhardt businesses receiving a very substantial decrease in rates versus a substantial increase for former Marrickville businesses
- 24 from individuals

**Appendices:**

1. Online comments
2. Written submissions (except confidential)



# Making rates fairer across the Inner West

Inner West Council is operating under three old rating systems – Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville.

By law, all amalgamated councils must harmonise rates from July 2021.

Harmonising rates will mean one rating system across the Inner West.

While Council is not increasing its overall income from rates, harmonisation means your rates may change.

To find out if you're affected, use the rates calculator online.

The change to rates will not increase the total rate revenue received by Inner West Council.

Harmonising rates means rates will be paid equitably in proportion to the land value by all ratepayers in the Inner West.

The State Government has made harmonisation of rates a requirement for all amalgamated councils in NSW.

Council is increasing the minimum rate to ensure all property owners are charged fairly for using Council services.

The new minimum rate:

- Residential – \$850
- Business General – \$820

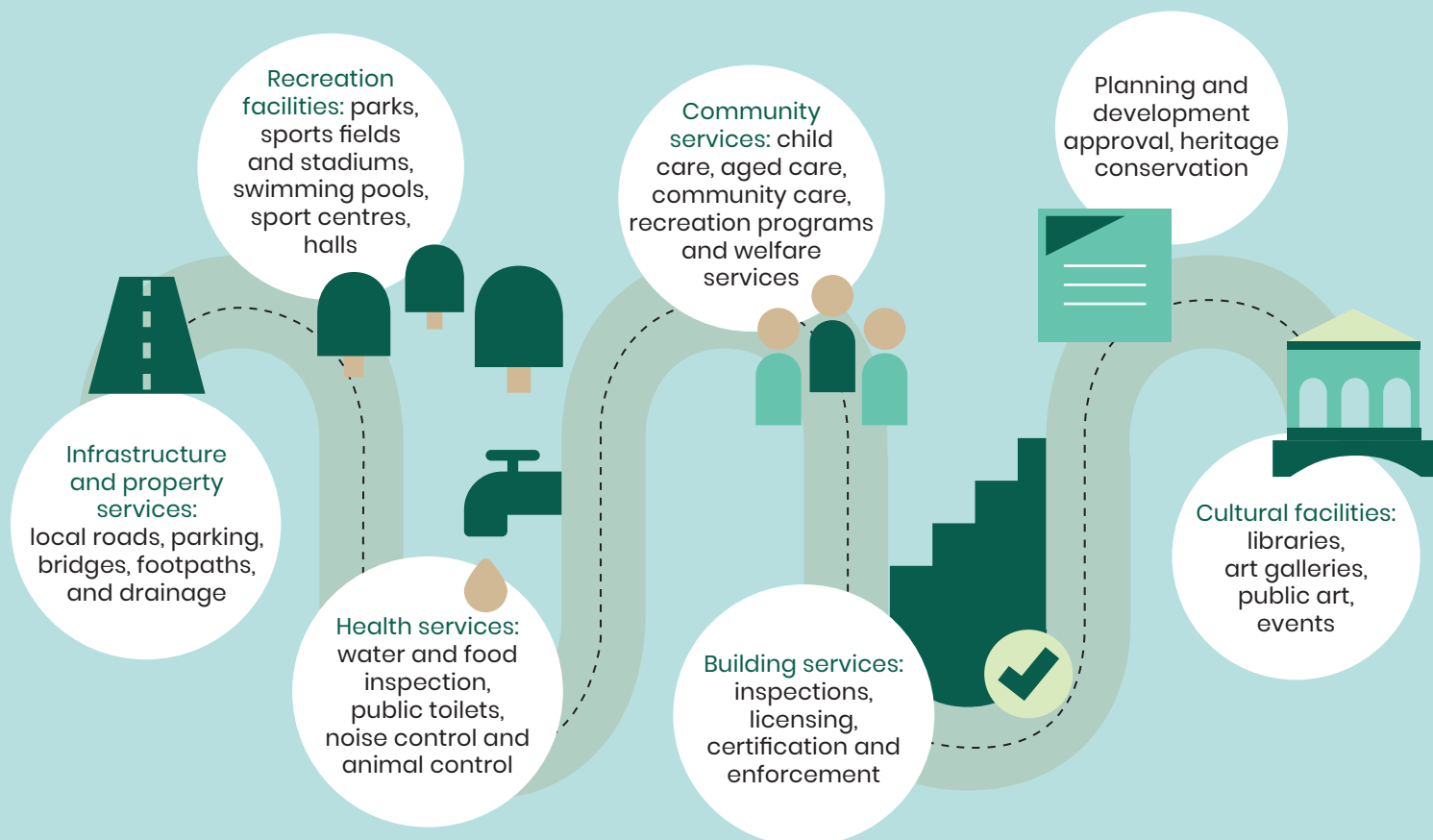
Do you support the proposed minimum rate?

Find out more and comment online by 7 February.

If approved the new rate structure will apply from 1 July 2021.

Have your say: [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates)

# Where do your rates go?



## Need help?

Ratepayers experiencing financial hardship can apply to defer payment of rates.  
Pensioners may be eligible for a rates rebate.

## Community Languages

Talk free with an interpreter call 131 450

Chinese Simplified	我们说普通话。如需免费传译服务，请致电 131 450，然后请传译员致电 02 9392 5859 接通 Inner West 市政府。			
Traditional Chinese	我們能說您的語言。如需免費傳譯服務，請致電 131 450，然後請傳譯員致電 02 9392 5859 接通 Inner West 市政府。			
Greek	Μιλάμε τη γλώσσα σας. Για να μιλήσετε δωρεάν σε διερμηνέα καλέστε το 131 450. Ζητήστε τους να καλέσουν το Δήμο Inner West Council στο 02 9392 5859.			
Italian	Parliamo la vostra lingua. Per parlare gratuitamente con un interprete chiamate il numero 131 450. Chiedetegli di chiamare il Comune di Inner West al numero 02 9392 5859.			
Vietnamese	Chúng tôi nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Muốn nói chuyện có thông dịch viên miễn phí, hãy gọi số 131 450. Yêu cầu họ gọi cho Hội đồng Thành phố Inner West qua số 02 9392 5859.			
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Find out more, access the rates calculator  
or have your say:  
[yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates)

Enquiries 02 9392 5859 or [myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au](mailto:myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au)  
Voice Relay 1300 555 727  
TTY 133 677



# Rates harmonisation fact sheet

## What are rates?

Rates are Council's main source of income. Rates income is used to maintain and improve services, and for the provision of facilities, programs, activities and capital works for the community. Rates are used to provide essential infrastructure and services.

Rates are calculated from property valuations supplied by the [NSW Valuer General](#). The calculation of rates is tied to the value of your property.

## Where do my rates go?

- Infrastructure and property services: local roads, parking, bridges, footpaths, drainage, waste collection and management
- Recreation facilities: parks, sports fields and stadiums, swimming pools, sport centres, halls
- Health services: water and food inspection, public toilets, noise control and animal control
- Community services: children's services, aged care, community care, recreation programs and welfare services
- Building services: inspections, licensing, certification and enforcement
- Planning and development: approval, heritage conservation
- Cultural facilities: libraries, art galleries, public art, events

## What is rates harmonisation?

At present, Inner West Council has three rates structures, a legacy from pre-amalgamation: the former Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Council rates structures.

Rate harmonisation means there will be a new rating structure for the whole Inner West. Rates will be paid more equitably by all ratepayers in the Inner West in proportion to land value.

## Why is Inner West harmonising rates?

Under the NSW Government's Local Government Act, Inner West Council is required by law to harmonise rates across the Inner West from 1 July 2021.

All amalgamated Councils in NSW must comply.

Council has approached the NSW Minister for Local Government asking for a gradual phasing in of rate harmonisation over several years.

## **How will Council harmonise rates?**

Council is introducing a new minimum rate, so all property owners are charged equally for using Council services.

For example, rates cost more for some households in some parts of the local government area. Some businesses are charged according to different rates structure that apply across the local government area.

Another example is that apartment dwellers tend to pay less to access the same Council services as homeowners.

## **How will I be affected?**

Some property owners' rates will go down. Others will go up. You can find out how your property will be affected by using the [rates calculator](#).

## **What options are available if the proposed change causes me financial hardship?**

Ratepayers experiencing financial hardship can apply to defer payment of rates.

Pensioners may be eligible for a rebate. Visit the [rates page](#) to find out more and to apply.

## **How does Council calculate rates?**

Rates are calculated based on land value. Ratepayers will either pay a minimum rate or ad valorem (rate per dollar of land value).

## **How is land valued?**

The [NSW Valuer General](#) issues new land values to councils at least every three years and sends Notices of Valuation to the property owner.

All councils received new land values for rating as of 1 July 2019. Notices of Valuation were sent out to property owners from January 2020.

## **Will Council's total rates revenue increase?**

No. Some ratepayers will pay more, and others will pay less, but rates harmonisation does not mean Council will be increasing its overall revenue from rates.

The amount that Council raises from rates overall may only increase each year by the rate peg.

## What is rate pegging?

Rate pegging is the NSW Government's limit on how much councils can increase their rates.

Since 2011-12, the rate peg has been set annually by the State's pricing regulator, the [Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal](#) (IPART).

This financial year, IPART set a limit of a rise of 2.6%, following an increase of 2.7% previously.

IPART has set the 2021-22 rate peg for NSW councils at 2.0%.

## What is the new rating structure?

As part of the rates harmonisation process, Council is introducing new minimum rates.

The proposed new minimum rates are:

- Residential – General \$850
- Business – (General, Industrial, Malls and Airport) \$820

This means that all ratepayers will pay at least \$850 for residential or \$820 for business rates but some will pay more depending on the value of their land. This is called an 'ad valorem' which means rate per dollar of land value.

This is the fairest way to calculate rates so that everyone pays a reasonable contribution towards Council services.

**You can find an estimate of the impact on your property's General Rates using the [online rates calculator](#).** The amounts do not include Waste and Stormwater charges or Pensioner Rebates/Discounts.

The following tables show how the new rating structure will change rates based on a low, average and high value property in each former Council area.

### Residential ratepayers

<b>Former Ashfield Council area land value (unimproved*)</b>	<b>2020/21 Rates</b>	<b>2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)</b>	<b>% and \$ impact/change</b>
Low \$265,998	\$994	\$850	-14.5% (-\$144)
Average \$500,000	\$1,217	\$850	-30.2% (-\$367)
High \$1,230,000	\$1,942	\$1,501	-22.7% (-\$441)

<b>Former Leichhardt Council area land value</b> (unimproved*)	2020/21 Rates	2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)	% and \$ impact/change
Low \$345,455	\$686	\$850	23.9% (+\$164)
Average \$931,000	\$1,243	\$1,139	-8.4% (-\$104)
High \$1,340,000	\$1,788	\$1,636	-8.5% (-\$152)

<b>Former Marrickville Council area land value</b> (unimproved*)	2020/21 Rates	2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)	% and \$ impact/change
Low \$233,272	\$710	\$850	19.7% (+\$140)
Average \$741,000	\$765	\$908	18.7% (+\$143)
High \$1,070,000	\$1,110	\$1,316	18.6% (+\$206)

\*The Valuer General uses unimproved land value. This means what a block of land is deemed worth without any buildings or structures on it.

Note - Low is the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile, Average is the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, High is the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile.

## **Business ratepayers**

<b>Former Ashfield Council area land value</b> (unimproved*)	2020/21 Rates	2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)	% and \$ impact/change
Low \$240,960	\$902	\$955	5.9% (+\$53)
Average \$878,500	\$3,055	\$3,256	6.6% (+\$201)
High \$3,416,000	\$12,817	\$13,680	6.7% (+\$863)

<b>Former Leichhardt Council area land value</b> (unimproved*)	2020/21 Rates	2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)	% and \$ impact/change
Low \$ 311,868	\$1,508	\$1,125	-25.4% (-\$384)
Average \$ 910,000	\$4,330	\$3,268	-24.5% (-\$1,062)
High \$2,720,000	\$14,035	\$10,637	-24.2% (-\$3,399)

<b>Former Marrickville Council area land value</b> (unimproved *)	2020/21 Rates	2021/22 Rates (New rating structure)	% and \$ impact/change
Low \$ 340,200	\$1,332	\$1,562	17.3% (+\$230)
Average \$ 874,000	\$3,263	\$3,877	18.8% (+\$614)
High \$2,610,000	\$11,464	\$12,255	6.9% (+\$791)

## How many ratepayers will pay minimum rates?

Approximately:

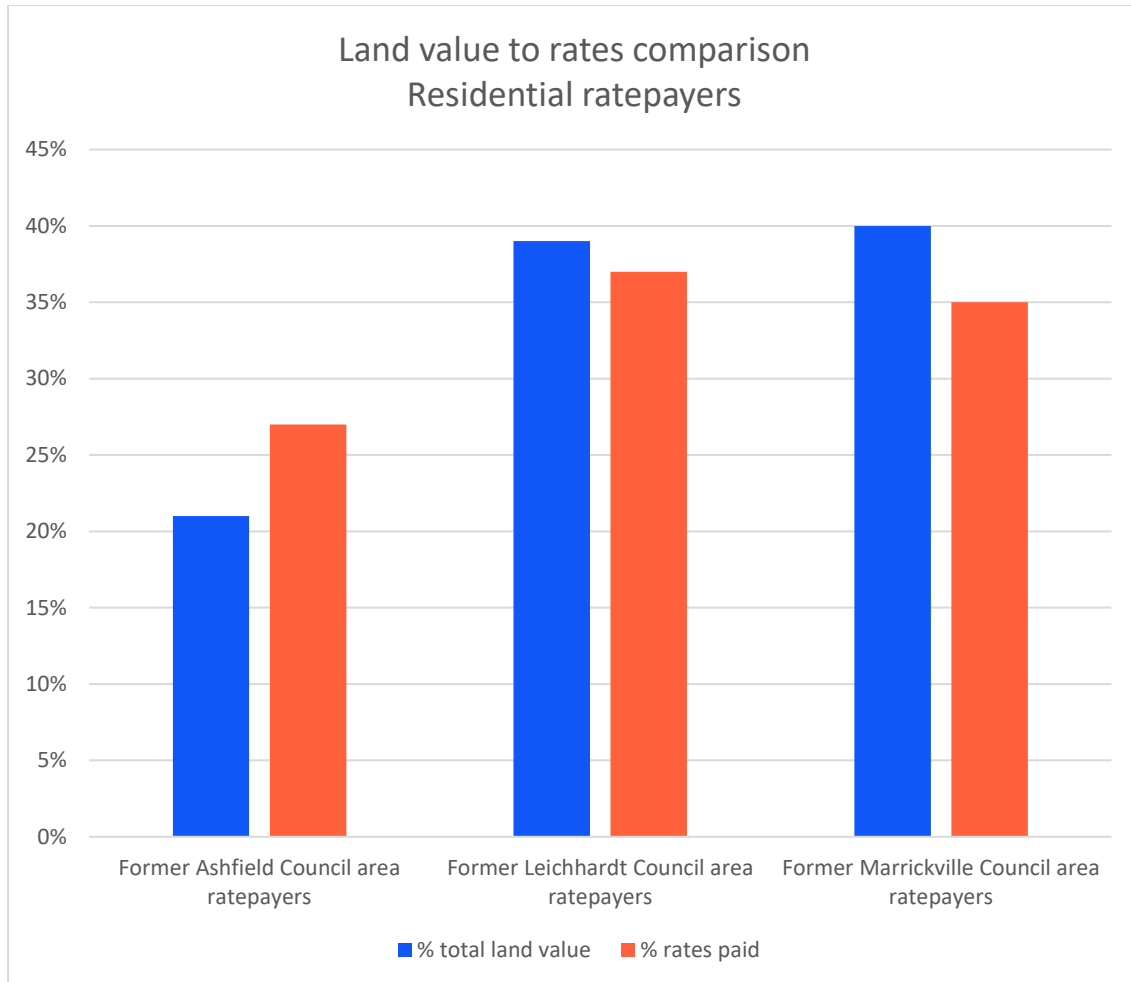
- 43% of residential ratepayers will pay the minimum rate of \$850  
(30,959 ratepayers will pay the minimum rate while 41,879 will pay ad valorem)
- 14% of business general ratepayers will pay the minimum rate of \$820  
(624 ratepayers will pay the minimum rate while 3,641 will pay ad valorem)
- 0.4% of business industrial ratepayers will pay the minimum rate of \$820  
(6 ratepayers will pay the minimum rate while 1,272 will pay ad valorem)

## Why is the new rating structure fairer?

Ratepayers will pay a fair share of rates based on the value of their land under the new rating structure.

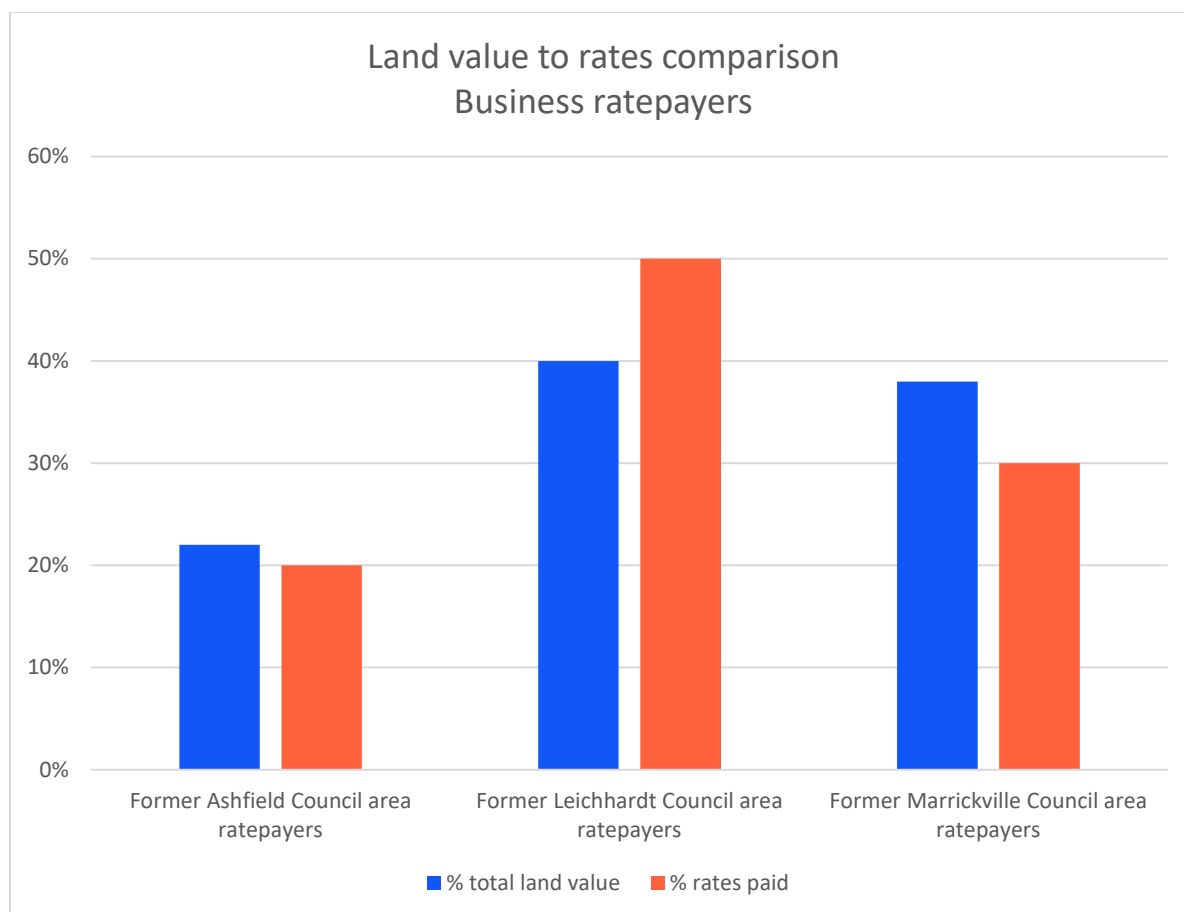
## Residential

Currently residential ratepayers in the former Ashfield Council area pay a higher percentage of rates compared to land value while ratepayers in the former Marrickville Council area pay a lower percentage of rates compared to land value.



## Business

Currently business ratepayers in the former Leichhardt Council area pay a higher percentage of rates compared to land value while ratepayers in the former Marrickville Council area pay a lower percentage of rates compared to land value.



An independent review of rates commissioned by Council also found that shopping centres (malls) pay a lower percentage share of rates for the services they use.

Under the proposed new rating structure, Council will raise an extra \$600,000 from the four shopping centres in the Inner West Council area while business rates (in the business-general category) will be reduced by \$600,000 overall. This will improve the alignment between benefits received and rates paid.

## How can I provide feedback?

Tell us whether you support the proposed new structure including the minimum rate. Comments close 7 February 2021.

Have your say at [yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates](https://yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/my-rates)

## What happens next?

Council officers will collate feedback into an Engagement Outcomes Report which will be published on Your Say Inner West. The elected Council will consider the matter at its meeting in February 2021. Everyone who provides feedback will be notified of the meeting date.

If adopted, Council will apply to [IPART](#) to approve the minimum rate. IPART will invite community feedback to inform its decision. The new rating structure will come into effect on 1 July 2021.

## Need help?

### Enquiries

Call Council's Rates information line on 02 9392 5859 or email [myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au](mailto:myrates@innerwest.nsw.gov.au)

### If you have a hearing or speech impairment

Contact us via the National Relay Service Monday to Friday 9am-4pm (Inner West Council Rates information line 02 9392 5859)

- Voice Relay number: 1300 555 727
- TTY number: 133 677
- SMS relay number: 0423 677 767

### If you would like a hard copy form posted to you or for help filling out the online form

Contact Renata Krchnakova, Engagement Officer on 9392 5501 or Annie Coulthard, Senior Engagement Specialist on 9392 5328.