EXHIBITION OF RATE INCREASE OPTIONS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

OCTOBER 2025

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Executive summary

Between 21 July and 1 September 2025, Ku-ring-gai Council conducted comprehensive community engagement on four rate increase options. These options were:

- Option 1 - Deteriorating Infrastructure (an assumed 3% increase in rates in line with the NSW Government rate peg)
- Option 2 - Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 19% and assumed 3% rate peg)
- Option 3 - Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including a SRV of 26% and assumed 3% rate peg)
- Option 4 - Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (33% increase in rates, including a SRV of 30% and assumed 3% rate peg)

A wide range of awareness-raising activities were undertaken in relation to these options, including mailing a letter and brochure to all ratepayers, bulk emails to ratepayers and community members and promotion via local media advertising, displays in Council venues, social media and outdoor banners.

Independent research found that 60% of the Ku-ring-gai community was aware of the engagement activity, which is far higher than the average awareness-raising result for other NSW councils who have recently sought feedback on rate increases.

Feedback was sought through a representative (that is randomly-selected) and opt-in (that is self-selected) survey, along with:

- Two recruited option discussion workshops (for which local residents were recruited via random selection)
- An in-person and online forum and two drop-in sessions (open to any interested party); and
- Calling for submissions.

Sentiment results

The representative survey was carefully designed to reflect the views of the wider Ku-ring-gai community, including matching the age and sex characteristics of the community. It found that:

- 56% of respondents ranked one of the three SRV options as their first preference, compared to 44% who ranked the rate peg only option as their first preference.
- When respondents were asked to state their level of support for each option, 66% said they were at least somewhat supportive of Option 2, which was the most preferred option ahead of 61% for Option 1, 45% for Option 3 and 28% for Option 4.

Separately, in the recruited workshops, seven out of the ten tables selected a SRV option as their first preference option.

Community sentiment was less favourable towards a SRV in the opt-in survey, in which any person could take part. However, this survey was only reflective of the people who participated in the survey and therefore its results cannot be generalised as reflecting the views of the wider community.

This is because the opt-in survey's respondents did not reflect the age demographics of the LGA's actual population.

In addition, these respondents were typically less satisfied with Council (compared to Council's community perception research and representative survey) and less supportive of maintaining and upgrading infrastructure (compared to the representative survey).

In the opt-in survey:

- 40% of respondents ranked one of the three SRV options as their highest preference, compared to 60% of respondents who ranked the rate peg only option as their highest preference; and
- When respondents were asked to state their level of support for each option, 67% said they were at least somewhat supportive of Option 1, which was the most preferred option ahead of 44% for Option 2, 29% for Option 3 and 18% for Option 4.

Across both surveys, respondents who supported a SRV did so because they felt it was needed for the maintenance of services and infrastructure. Those who opposed a SRV believed that Council should be using its current funding "more wisely" or were concerned about affordability and cost of living impacts from a SRV.

Submissions and thematic analysis

In addition, more than 570 emailed and mailed submissions were received. It should be noted that some of the emailed submissions may have been duplicated by individuals and sent from different accounts.

An analysis was undertaken of the most mentioned themes in submissions and the recruited workshops. The most mentioned themes were:

- Support for Marian St Theatre (about 50% of submissions).
- Rather than increasing rates, Council should cut services or costs to fund infrastructure, including going 'back to basics'.
- Concern about the affordability and cost of living impacts of a rate increase
- There is a need for greater focus on efficiency and cost containment, with feedback suggesting Council should consider a rate increase only after undertaking an efficiency review.
- There is a need for a rate increase option between 3 and 22%
- There is a need for greater detail, engagement and information as to how revenue has and will be spent, including on infrastructure

Conclusion

The representative survey and recruited workshops illustrate that there is majority community support for the SRV options, and Option 2 in particular.

However, the results of the representative and opt-in surveys also illustrates that there are many community members who are not supportive of a SRV.

In addition, feedback received from a wide range of avenues – including the surveys, events and submissions – illustrates that community members would also like Council to consider a range of financial and infrastructure management issues, regardless of whether a SRV is implemented.

Awareness-raising activity summary

Between 21 July and 1 September 2025, Council conducted comprehensive community engagement on the four rate increase options outlined in Council's resolution of 17 June 2025. This activity proceeded under the banner "Funding better local infrastructure: have your say on rate increase options".

These options were presented in line with the table below:

Option name	Deteriorating Increase	Renew Infrastructure	Renew and Enhance Infrastructure	Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure
Option number	1	2	3	4
PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE (%)				
Assumed rate peg	3%	3%	3%	3%
Special Rate Variation	0	19%	26%	30%
Total rate increase	**3%**	**22%**	**29%**	**33%**
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL ($m)				
Stormwater and drainage	$0	$5.9	$5.9	$5.9
Buildings (e.g. halls, amenities and pavilions)	$0	$6.7	$6.7	$6.7
Recreational facilities (e.g. sportsfields, parks, open space)	$0	$1.5	$2.1	$2.1
Existing footpaths	$0	$0.94	$0.94	$0.94
New footpaths	$0	$0	$3.8	$3.8
Other infrastructure upgrades (e.g. traffic and transport works)	$0	$0	$1.7	$2.4
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$0	$1.46	$1.46	$1.46
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$0	$0	$0	$2.98
PROPOSED 2026/27 AVERAGE RATE INCREASE				
Residential rates	$52 ($1 a week)	$378 ($7.27 per week)	$499 ($9.60 a week)	$568 ($10.92 a week)
Business rates	$173 ($3.33 a week)	$1,272 ($24.46 per week)	$1,676 ($32.33 a week)	$1,907 ($36.68 a week)

Table 1: Rate increase options

Awareness raising on the rate increase options was comprehensive and included the following activities:

- Mailing letters and a six-page brochure to all ratepayers (44,766) including ratepayers who had requested to receive their rates notice via email rather than mail.
- Emailing all ratepayers who had elected to receive their rates notice via email (11,726 ratepayers)
- Placing an advertisement in the 24 July edition of the North Shore Times and the August editions of the Sydney Observer, Bush Telegraph and The Post
- Issuing a media release to 27 local and metropolitan media organisations, including multicultural media outlets.
- Placing a physical banner outside the Council Chambers at Gordon and a sign as part of Council's allocation on the digital advertising banner above the Pacific Highway at Gordon.
- Promoting the engagement activity in various Council newsletters, and through flyers and stalls at Council venues.

In addition, a Your Say page was established where, from 21 July 2025, community members could view a range of information, including:

- Fact sheets and information about each option
- The adopted Long Term Financial Plan (which included further information about the four options) and Asset Management Strategy (which was based on Option 2)
- A single rate option comparison table (as shown in the brochure)
- A table showing business and ratepayer rate increases under the Special Rate Variation options in the coming four years
- Information on engagement events
- Contact details for queries and lodging submissions
- Frequently asked questions
- A survey link

Part way during the exhibition period, the following documents were added to the page:

- A video about the options
- A video recording of the online forum
- A series of charts comparing key Council financial information to other councils
- An example list of projects which could be funded by Special Rate Variation options
- The in-person forum presentation
- Updated frequently asked questions in response to common community queries.

The YourSay page was accessible by the URL www.krg.nsw.gov.au/srv. During the engagement period, the page had 20,564 views from 8,861 visitors and 3,117 document downloads.

More detail about awareness-raising activity is available at **Attachment A**.

Community awareness results

An important aspect of a potential SRV application relates to awareness. Criterion 2 of the Office of Local Government guidelines for SRVs relates to awareness, stating that there must be “evidence that the community is aware of the need for and extent for a rate rise”.[1]

A question on awareness was included in the Micromex representative survey (see more details on this survey below). The question was “prior to this survey, were you aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards applying for a Special Rate Variation”. Some 60% of survey respondents said they were aware of the engagement activity, which was well above the 44% awareness result from more than 20 surveys (containing around 11,000 interviews) on the same subject matter conducted by Micromex for other councils.

This indicates there was a high level of awareness that Council was seeking community feedback on the rate increase options. The mailout to ratepayers was the most cited awareness-raising activity (mentioned by 81% of respondents).

[1] NSW Office of Local Government, Guidelines for the preparation of an application for a Special Variation to general income, November 2020, page 9, available at Guidelines for preparation of an application for a special variation to general income | IPART

Sentiment summary

This section of the report outlines the levels of support for the different rate increase options, as indicated in the representative and opt-in survey, and in the recruited workshops.

Representative survey results

Research consultancy Micromex was commissioned to undertake a representative (also known as randomly selected) survey of 400 residents. The survey sample was weighted to reflect the actual adult age and sex characteristics of the LGA's population.

The commissioning of this survey was designed to meet Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) Special Rate Variation guidelines to conduct a survey which was "random and appropriately stratified to capture the population characteristics of the local government area". [2] In other words, the survey was designed to produce the clearest and most impartial view of community sentiment on the rate increase options, given that community members were chosen at random and reflective of the broader make-up of the community as a whole.

By surveying 400 residents, Micromex was able to reach a maximum standard error of +/-5% at the 95% confidence level for the results. This means that if the same survey was undertaken a further 20 times – each with a new universe of 400 residents - 19 times the answers to questions would lie between +/- 5% of the original survey result.

Participants were reached via telephone, with telephone numbers being sourced from commercially-available lists.

Below is a breakdown of key information about the survey participants:

- 95% were ratepayers, and 5% were non-ratepayers (ie: tenants)
- Participants were drawn from 17 suburbs across the LGA, with participants most likely to be drawn from (in order of popularity) St Ives, Lindfield, Turramurra, Wahroonga
- 11% of participants were aged 18-34, 22% aged 35-49, 31% were aged 50-64 and 36% aged 65 and over.

The survey results from the above sample were then weighted to reflect the adult age and sex characteristics of the LGA.

Participants were read a pre-prepared script, including a preamble as to why Council was engaging on the options, and a description of the options, and then asked to answer questions.

A full report on the survey is attached to the Council report (**Attachment A2**), however the top-level sentiment findings are available below.

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[2] Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, 2025/26 Special Rate Variation Guidance for councils, page 26, available at [2025-26 Guidance booklet for Councils - Special Variations - How to prepare and apply | IPART]

Representative survey sentiment results

Sentiment towards the options was explored through two questions.

The first question sought to understand the level of support for each rate increase option, by asking participants to state whether they were either very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the option.

This question found that Option 2 (Renew Infrastructure) was the most supported option, with 66% of respondents saying there were at least somewhat supportive of this option.

Option	Percentage of respondents who were at least somewhat supportive of the option
Option 1 - Deteriorating Infrastructure	61%
Option 2 - Renew infrastructure	66%
Option 3 - Renew and Enhance Infrastructure	45%
Option 4 - Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure	28%

Table 2: Percentage of representative survey respondents at least somewhat satisfied with rate increase options

Importantly, if non-ratepayers were excluded from the survey results, the outcome was similar, with 65% of ratepayers at least somewhat supportive of Option 2, 61% of Option 1, 43% of Option 3 and 26% of Option 4.

The second question asked residents to rank the four options, from most to least preferred. All four options were required to be ranked.

This question found that 56% participants ranked one of the three SRV options as their highest preference, compared to 44% of participants who ranked the rate peg only option as their highest preference.

In addition, 71% of participants ranked Option 4 as their lowest preference, followed by 24% for Option 1, and just 4% for Option 3 and 1% for Option 2.

	Highest Preference	Second preference	Third preference	Lowest preference
Option 1 - Deteriorating Infrastructure	44%	20%	12%	24%
Option 2 - Renew Infrastructure - 22% increase[3]	34%	50%	16%	1%
Option 3 - Renew and Enhance Infrastructure - 29% increase	13%	23%	60%	4%
Option 4 - Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure - 33% increase	9%	8%	12%	71%

Table 3: Preferences of representative survey respondents in option ranking question

Representative survey other results

In the representative survey, responds were also asked:

- How important they believed it was for Council to implement plans and programs that will maintain/renew local infrastructure in the local area (from very important to not at all important); and
- How satisfied they were with the performance of Council, not just on one or two issues, but across all responsibility areas, over the past 12 months (again from very important to note at all important).

[3] Due to rounding issues, numbers in this row add up to more than 100%

The purpose of the infrastructure question was to be able to better understand a respondent's viewpoint on infrastructure when providing feedback on the options.

The purpose of the satisfaction question was to gauge the overall level of satisfaction with Council performance, in order to ascertain whether the SRV consultation has impacted community sentiment.

The representative survey found:

- 89% of residents believe it is 'important' or 'very important' for Council to implement plans and programs that will maintain/renew local infrastructure in the local area.
- 85% of residents are at least 'somewhat satisfied' with the performance of Council over the last 12 months. This compared to 84% of residents who were at least 'somewhat satisfied' with Council's performance in the 2024 Community Research Report, which is an indication that, despite the potential impact of the proposed SRV, resident satisfaction has remained stable. [4]

Recruited workshops

On 18 August and 21 August, sentiment and feedback on the rate increase options was also explored at two workshops.

The 68 residents in these two workshops were selected at random from the original pool of residents who completed the representative survey, along with from person-to-person recruitment at Gordon railway station and St Ives centre. Residents were provided an incentive to attend.

At these workshops, residents were provided with a presentation on Council's financial and infrastructure position, and the rate increase options. Residents were then divided into tables and asked to:

- Articulate their views on Council's financial challenges
- List the pros and cons of each option
- Rank the options

Participants were also asked to provide feedback on awareness levels, including on the fact the rate increase was proposed to be permanent, and any other matters they thought Council should consider as Council progressed the rate increase option project.

The purpose of the workshops was to create an informed and collaborative environment, where an effective "jury" of community members could discuss and provide feedback on Council's future revenue and financial trajectory.

Out of the ten tables that took part in the two workshops, seven selected a SRV option as their most preferred option.

Of these seven tables, three selected Option 2, three selected Option 3 and one selected Option 4, as their most preferred option. This is shown in the table below:

[4] The 2024 Community Research Report is available at https://www.krg.nsw.gov.au/Council/Strategic-plans-finance-reports-and-publications/Performance-reporting/Community-feedback-report

Table	Most preferred	Second most preferred	Third most preferred	Least preferred
1	29% increase (Option 3)	Equal - 33% increase (Option 4) and 3% increase (Option 1)		22% increase (Option 2)
2	33% increase (Option 4)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	3% increase (Option 1)
3	3% increase (Option 1)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)
4	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	3% increase (Option 1)	No vote
5	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	33% increase (Option 4)	3% increase (Option 1)
6	29% increase (Option 3)	Equal between 3% increase (Option 1) and 22% increase (Option 2)		No vote
7	3% increase (Option 1)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)
8	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	3% increase (Option 1)	33% increase (Option 4)
9	3% increase (Option 1)	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	33% increase (Option 4)
10	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)	3% increase (Option 1)

Table 4: Option ranking by tables in two recruited workshops

A more detailed report on the outcomes of the recruited workshops is available at **Attachment B**.

Opt-in survey results

Opt-in survey design

Any person was also able to fill out a survey, which asked the same questions as the representative survey. Some 4,515 people filled out this survey, either online or through hard-copy surveys left in Council venues. Survey integrity was maintained through the removal of multiple responses from the same person.

The purpose of the opt-in survey was to allow:

- Any person, who may not have been randomly selected for the representative survey, to complete a survey on the options
- Stakeholders who are not residents (such as business ratepayers who do not live in the area), or workers or visitors, to be able to fill out a survey.

However, due to the self-selecting nature of the opt-in survey, and unlike the representative survey, the opt-in survey cannot be regarded as genuinely reflective of broader community sentiment.

This is because, as illustrated in the table below, the opt-in survey respondents did not reflect the age make-up of the broader LGA, in particular being more likely to be aged 35 and up.

They were also, compared to either Council's 2024 Community Research Report or the rate increase option representative survey results as detailed earlier in this report, less satisfied with Council's performance and less supportive of plans and programs to maintain and renew local infrastructure.

Cohort	Percentage of opt-in survey respondents	Actual percentage	Data source for actual percentage
Aged between 18-34	5	21	Australian Bureau of Statistics (adult population) 2021 Census data
Aged between 35-49	29	27	
Aged between 50-64	38	26	
Aged 65 plus	28	25	
At least somewhat satisfied with Council's performance	72	84	2024 Community Research Report
		85	2025 rate increase option representative survey
Believe it is important or very important to implement plans and programs that will maintain or renew local infrastructure	68	89	2025 rate increase option representative survey

Table 5: Difference between opt-in survey respondents and actual community make-up

Further information about the opt-in survey is attached to the Council report (**Attachment A3**).

Opt-in survey sentiment results

As with the representative survey, sentiment in the opt-in survey was explored through two questions.

The first question sought to understand the level of support for each rate increase option, by asking participants to state whether they were either very satisfied, satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the option.

This question found that Option 1 (Deteriorating Infrastructure) was the most supported option, with 67% saying they were at least somewhat satisfied with this option.

Option	Percentage of respondents who were at least somewhat supportive of the option
Option 1 - Deteriorating Infrastructure	67%
Option 2 - Renew infrastructure	44%
Option 3 - Renew and Enhance Infrastructure	29%
Option 4 - Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure	18%

Table 6: Percentage of opt-in survey respondents at least somewhat satisfied with rate increase options

The second question asked residents to rank the four options.

This question found that 40% of respondents ranked one of the three SRV options as their highest preference, compared to 60% of respondents who ranked the rate peg only option as their highest preference.

In addition, 75% of participants ranked Option 4 as their lowest preference, followed by 24% for Option 1, and less than 2% for both Option 2 and 3 combined.

	Highest Preference	Second preference	Third preference	Lowest preference
Option 1 - Deteriorating Infrastructure	60%	9%	7%	24%
Option 2 - Renew Infrastructure - 22% increase	18%	67%	14%	<1%
Option 3 - Renew and Enhance Infrastructure - 29% increase [5]	12%	20%	68%	1%
Option 4 - Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure - 33% increase	10%	4%	11%	75%

Table 7: Preferences of opt-in survey respondents in option ranking question

An analysis of the survey results shows that the viewpoint of respondents on the importance of maintaining and renewing local infrastructure was an important factor in determining the most preferred rate increase option.

This analysis shows that:

- Of the people who felt maintaining and renewing local infrastructure was somewhat, not very or not at all important, only 7% supported a SRV option as their first preference
- Of the people who considered maintaining and renewing local infrastructure as very important or important, 56% selected a SRV option as their first preference.

In short, respondents who were more supportive of maintaining and renewing local infrastructure were more likely to support a SRV option, and the opt-in survey had a lower proportion of respondents with this viewpoint compared to the representative survey.

Nevertheless, the overall results of the opt-in survey show there are a substantial number of community members who are not supportive of an SRV.

Opt-in survey business feedback

The representative survey was primarily targeted at residents, with just 1% of respondents (total number less than five) also identifying as business ratepayers. Due to this small sample size, it was not possible to ascertain a credible sentiment result from business ratepayers in the representative survey.

[5] Due to rounding issues, numbers in this row add up to more than 100%

Of the 4,515 opt-in survey respondents, 77 identified as business ratepayers. This was still a relatively small sample size, however it was possible to undertake some analysis of the sentiment of this cohort.

Overall, this group was more inclined to prefer Option 1 (82% of business ratepayers supported this option as their first preference in the ranking question, compared to 60% of all respondents). In addition, business ratepayers were less likely to be satisfied with Council's performance and less likely to consider it important for Council to implement plans and programs to maintain or renew local infrastructure.

Thematic feedback

This section of the report outlines the themes and issues raised by participants, either in expressing a view on an option or as a suggestion for Council to consider when implementing one or more of the options.

Representative survey reasons for option ranking question response

The representative survey asked respondents for their reason for selecting one of the options as their first preference. Those who selected Option 1 typically cited their reasons as being:

- Council should use funds more wisely (19% of respondents)
- Cost of living is too high and/or existing rates are too high (11% of respondents)
- It is the cheapest option and should be enough for maintenance (10% of respondents)
- Council should operate within its budget (6% of respondents)

Respondents who selected a SRV option typically cited their reasons as being:

- Rate rise is needed for the maintenance of services and infrastructure (35% of respondents)
- It is the best option, and reasonable (30% of respondents)
- Although I have expressed support for a rate increase, Council should also consider using funds more wisely (8% of respondents).

Opt-in survey reason for option ranking decision

The same question, relating to the reasons for selecting an option as a first preference, was asked in the opt-in survey.

Those who selected Option 1 typically cited their reasons as being:

- Cost of living is too high, and/or rates are already too high
- Council use existing funds more wisely
- Council should operate within its budget

Those who selected a SRV option as their first preference typically cited:

- That a rate rise is needed for the maintenance of services and infrastructure
- That they supported a rate increase, however the cost of living and the cost of existing rates needed to be considered
- A rate rise was necessary for future planning and the community.

Submissions

Any interested party was invited to email or mail a submission to Council in relation to the options. There were no integrity checks undertaken on these submissions, with individuals able to generate and send multiple emails from different accounts. Some 574 submissions were received.

The majority of all submissions (some 327) expressed support for the Marian St Theatre funding, including because of its importance for the arts and local creativity, for business growth and youth development.

Organisational submissions

The vast majority of submissions were from residents. Some organisational submissions were received however from the following groups.

Submission from	Summary
North Turramurra Action Group	Opposed to special rate increase
Dance 1	Supports Option 4
Sanskriti – A School of Indian Performing Arts	Supports Option 4
Marian St Theatre Action	Supports Option 4
Marian St Theatre for Young People	Supports Option 4
Sing Australia Gordon	Supports Option 4
Hummingsong Community Choirs	Supports Option 4
Old Fitz Theatre	Supports Option 4
Aspen Lifestyle	Supports Option 1
North Shore Theatre Company	Supports Option 4
Ku-ring-gai Youth Orchestra	Supports Option 4

Table 8: Summary of organisational submissions

Most commonly mentioned themes in submissions and recruited workshops

An analysis has been undertaken of the most commonly mentioned themes in submissions, and in the free text responses to the final question of the recruited workshops where participants were asked for any matters which Council should be considering when progressing its investigation of the rate increase options. Some of these comments and/or submissions contained multiple themes, while others contained no real theme.

Similar views were also expressed in the two surveys, when respondents were asked to state why they preferred a certain option.

The themes mentioned ten or more times are listed below. A full list of all themes is available at **Attachment C**.

Theme	Number of times mentioned
Council should fund the Marian St Theatre, including because of its importance for local arts and creativity, business growth and youth development	327
Council should cut services or costs to fund infrastructure, including going ‘back to basics’. Suggested areas for reduced expenditure included events, printing, street signs, town centre beautification, translation and environmental, community development and sustainability programs and senior staff salaries	53
Concern about affordability and cost of living impacts of rate increase	51
There is a need for a greater focus on efficiency and cost containment, including a perception that Council does not have a sufficient commitment to efficiency and should only examine a rate increase after an efficiency review	41
There is a need for a rate increase option between 3 and 22%	24

There is a need for greater detail, engagement and information as to how revenue has and will be spent, including on infrastructure	22
Rate increase not justified due to Norman Griffiths cost increase	19
Council should either be seeking to increase funds from developers to mitigate a rate increase, or these funds as currently planned should mitigate an increase.	18
Rate increase not justified due to alleged wastage of funds on Blue Mountains workshop expenditure	17
Concern that Council does not have a sufficient robust project management or delivery capacity to provide the additional infrastructure	15
Not appropriate to add St Ives Indoor Sports Centre to Options 2, 3 or 4, as the centre is perceived to not be of sufficient value or should be funded through centre users	12
Rate increases are needed for better infrastructure and property values	12
Council should find other revenue sources, apart from rates – such as encouraging more businesses to move into the area, improved park, tree and other fine revenue and sponsorship from corporations	12
Marian St Theatre not necessary to re-open, including because of cost, allegedly lack of viability and easy access to other nearby alternatives	11
Council needs to conduct a full financial review before, or as part of, a rate increase	10

Table 9: Most commonly mentioned themes in submissions and recruited workshops

Attachment A: Awareness-raising activities

Media release

On 21 July, a media release was issued to 27 local and metropolitan media organisations, including multicultural media outlets.

MEDIA RELEASE

21 July 2025

Have your say on funding better local infrastructure

The Ku-ring-gai community is invited to have its say on proposed rate increase options to fund vital local infrastructure.

Ku-ring-gai Council is considering four options to increase rates, of which three will allocate additional funding for the renewal and upgrade of aging infrastructure.

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40% but rates revenue has only grown by 28%, largely due to NSW Government rate pegging.

In addition, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite Council having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

This situation has reduced Council's capacity to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure, including community buildings, stormwater and drainage, parks and recreational facilities, footpaths, local roads and more. Without an increase in rates beyond the assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%, the quality of infrastructure is expected to decline.

Council is seeking feedback on four options:

1. Deteriorating Infrastructure (3% increase in rates in line with NSW Government rate peg)
2. Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including rate peg)
3. Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including rate peg)
4. Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (33% increase in rates, including rate peg)

Options 2, 3 and 4 will provide between $16.5 million and $26.3 million in additional annual funding to renew and upgrade a range of existing and new infrastructure.

This infrastructure includes stormwater and drainage, community buildings, recreational facilities and open space areas, traffic and transport works and footpaths.

Ku-ring-gai Mayor Christine Kay said all ratepayers are invited to share their views on the proposed options.

"We encourage all ratepayers to find out more about each of the four options and share their thoughts on what they believe would be the best outcome for the community," Mayor Kay said.

"Your valuable feedback will help inform the decision our Council takes."

Letters and brochures have been posted to all Ku-ring-gai ratepayers. Detailed information on each of the four options is also available on Council's website. Ratepayers can have their say before Sunday 31 August. For more information visit www.krg.nsw.gov.au/srv

This media release generated coverage in Ku-ring-gai Living, the Lorikeet and Bush Tele, as shown below.

Ku-ring-gai Living story (21 July 2025)

COUNCIL NEEDS YOU TO PICK A RATE RISE... FROM 3% – 33%

July 21, 2025

The Ku-ring-gai community is invited to have its say on proposed rate increase options to fund vital local infrastructure. Council has released the following statement:

Ku-ring-gai Council is considering four options to increase rates, of which three will allocate additional funding for the renewal and upgrade of aging infrastructure.

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40% but rates revenue has only grown by 28%, largely due to NSW Government rate pegging.

In addition, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite Council having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

The Lorikeet coverage (22 July 2025)

Have your say: Ku-ring-gai council seeking community feedback on potential rate hikes

Residents of the local government area have four options to give feedback on, ranging from a standard 3 percent increase, to a 33 percent increase.

Huw Bradshaw
July 22, 2025

Seeking to fund the "renewal and upgrade of aging infrastructure" in the upper North Shore region, councillors of Ku-ring-gai have put forward plans to increase rates in the 2026/27 financial year.

But before it increases rates, the council must apply for a special rate variation, which is necessary when a council proposes a rise larger than the standard annual increase of 3 percent.

Ku-ring-gai council is currently seeking community feedback on its plans, which have been split into four distinct options. These include the standard rate rise of 3 percent and three increasingly larger rates, of 22, 29, and 33 percent increases.

Bush Tele (August 2025)

HAVE YOUR SAY ON FUNDING BETTER LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

KU-RING-GAI COUNCIL is considering four options to increase rates, of which three will allocate additional funding for the renewal and upgrade of aging infrastructure.

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40% but rates revenue has only grown by 28%, largely due to NSW Government rate pegging. In addition, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite Council having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

This situation has reduced Council's capacity to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure.

Without an increase in rates beyond the assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%, the quality of infrastructure is expected to decline.

Council is seeking feedback on four options:

- Deteriorating Infrastructure (3% increase in rates in line with NSW Government rate peg)
- Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including rate peg)
- Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including rate peg)
- Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (33% increase in rates, including rate peg)

Options 2, 3 and 4 will provide between $16.5 million and $26.3 million in additional annual funding to renew and upgrade a range of existing and new infrastructure.

This infrastructure includes stormwater and drainage, community buildings, recreational facilities and open space areas, traffic and transport works and footpaths.

Ku-ring-gai Mayor **Christine Kay** said, "Your valuable feedback will help inform the decision our Council takes." BT

Ratepayers can have their say before Sunday 31 August. For more information visit www.krg.nsw.gov.au/srv

SEE ADVERT PAGE 26

Newspaper advertisements

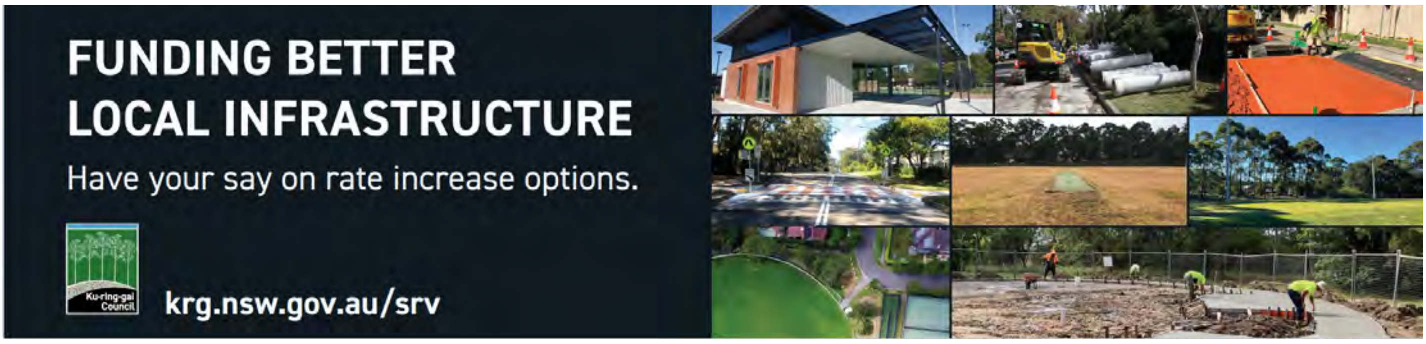
An advertisement was placed in the 24 July edition of the North Shore Times and the August editions of the Sydney Observer, Bush Telegraph and The Post. The advertisement is shown below.

Banner outside Gordon Council Chambers

During the week commencing 21 July, a banner was placed outside the Council chamber at Gordon. This banner is shown below.

Banner on digital sign over Pacific Highway

A digital sign was placed on the advertising sign over the Pacific Highway at Gordon. This was shown on a regular time cycle, among other advertisements and Council messages. This sign is shown below.



E-newsletter to ratepayers

FUNDING BETTER LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Have your say on rate increase options

Ku-ring-gai Council is facing significant financial challenges to renew and upgrade essential local infrastructure in line with community expectations.

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40%, but the amount of money collected through rates has only grown by 26%.

This gap is largely due to NSW Government rate pegging, which limits how much revenue councils can collect from rates each year. To date, Ku-ring-gai Council has addressed the challenge by implementing cost savings and efficiencies within the organisation. However, further scope for cost savings is limited.

In addition, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite Council having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

This is reducing Council's capacity to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure, including buildings, stormwater and drainage, parks and recreational facilities, footpaths, roads and more.

This infrastructure has been deteriorating for generations due to inadequate funding. If this situation continues, the quality of infrastructure will continue to decline, with Council required to spend increasing amounts on temporary repairs.

At the same time, independent research tells us that there is strong support for high-quality local infrastructure.

As a result, Council is seeking your feedback on four options, of which three will deliver infrastructure improvements. These are:

- Base case – Deteriorating infrastructure (an assumed 3% increase in rates in line with the NSW Government rate peg)
- Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg)
- Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg)
- Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (33% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg)

Learn more and have your say

Go to our engagement hub where you can:

- Learn more about the options, including their benefits and impacts on your rates
- Fill out an online survey
- Find out about and/or register to attend, consultation events

We are seeking community feedback by 31 August

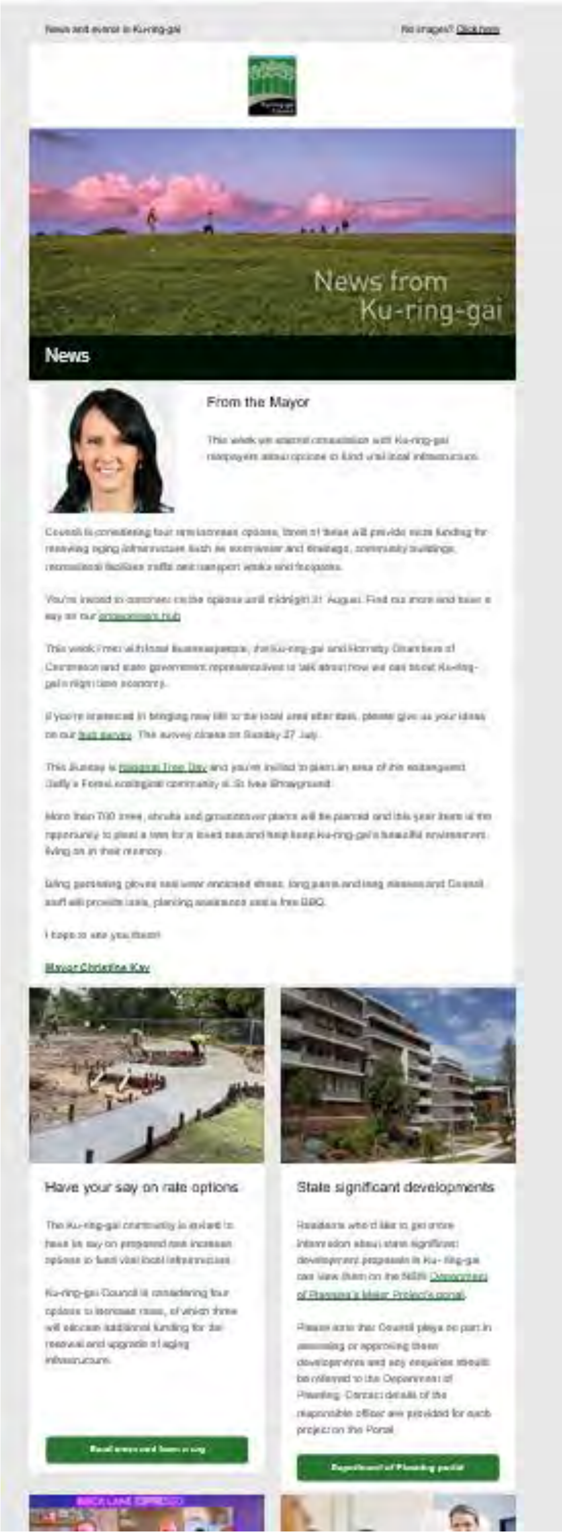
Have your say

Ku-ring-gai Council
818 Pacific Highway
Gordon 2072
krg.nsw.gov.au

On 22 July, an email was sent to all Ku-ring-gai ratepayers who had elected to receive their rates notice via email.

This was received by 11,726 subscribers, with 68% open rate and 1,360 clicks on the Have Your Say button.

News from Ku-ring-gai email



On 25 July, the rate increase option engagement activity was included in the fortnightly News from Ku-ring-gai email, including in the Mayor’s column and as a separate highlighted item.

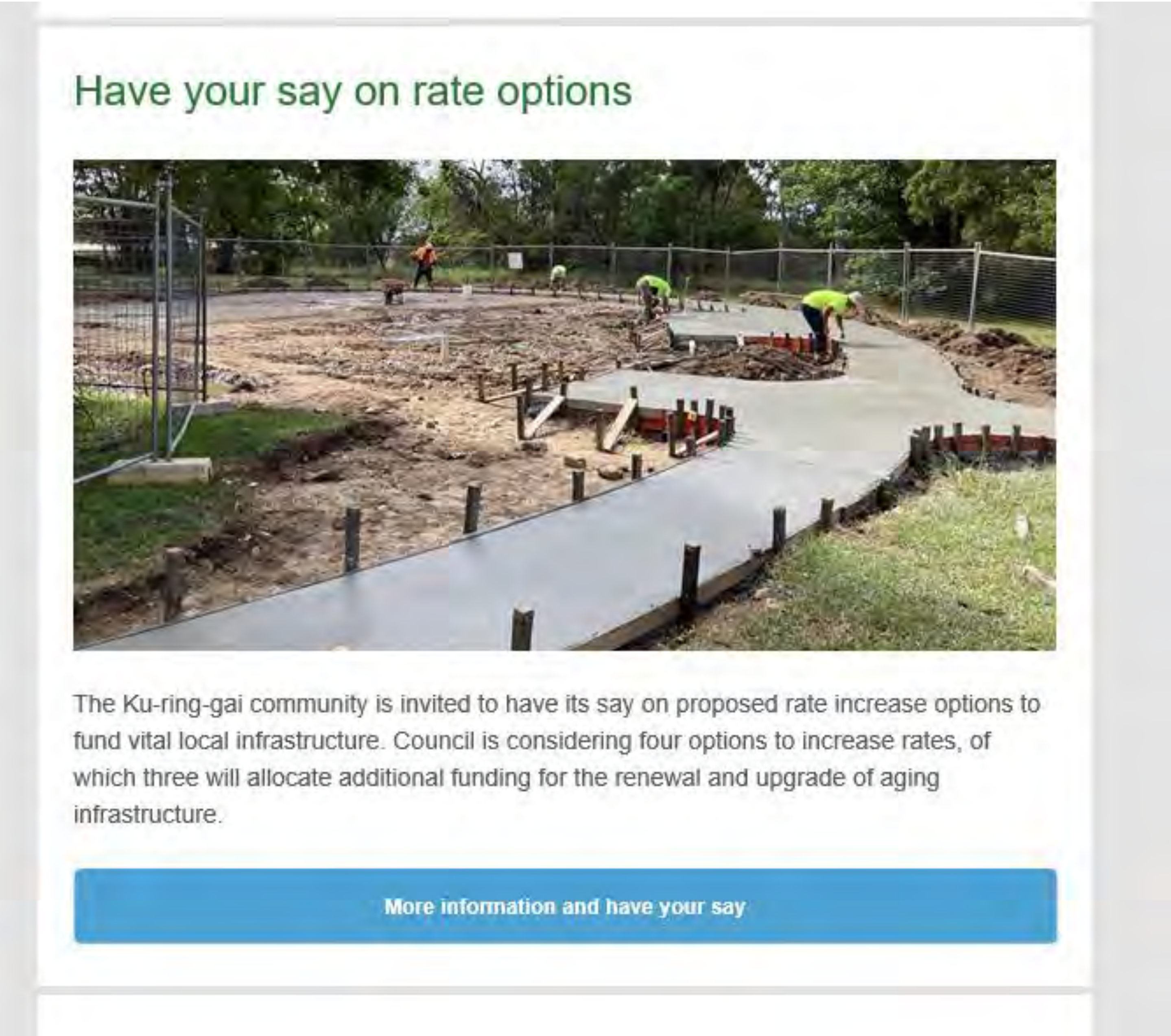
This email was sent to 39,233 subscribers, with some 680 of these subscribers clicking on the link for more information about the options.

The rate increase option was also promoted in the News from Ku-ring-gai email on 8 August. This email went to 39,133 subscribers, with some 372 clicking on the relevant link.

Business connections newsletter

On 31 July, the engagement opportunity was promoted to 21,969 subscribers of Council's two business-related e-newsletters.

Through these two e-newsletters, some 608 clicked on the relevant link to learn more about the rate increase options.



YourSay enewsletter

On 1 August, the engagement opportunity was promoted to 1,248 subscribers to Council's YourSay email. Some 55 subscribers clicked on the link to find out more about the rate increase options.

No images? Click here

Funding better local infrastructure - Have your say on rate increase options

Council is consulting our community on four options to increase rates, of which three will allocate additional funding for the renewal and upgrade of local infrastructure.

A range of financial challenges have reduced Council's capacity to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure.

Without an increase in rates beyond the assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%, the quality of infrastructure will decline further. Services would need to be reduced to redirect funds towards critical infrastructure maintenance and renewal. However, the scope for service reductions is limited and would be inadequate to address the funding shortfall.

Council is seeking feedback on four options:

1. Deteriorating Infrastructure (3% increase in rates in line with NSW Government rate peg)
2. Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including rate peg)
3. Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including rate peg)

Letter and brochure to ratepayers

Some 44,766 letters and a six-page brochure were sent to all ratepayers, including ratepayers who had requested to receive their rates notice via email. This letter and brochure began to be received in letterboxes from 22 July.

The covering envelope included a message “Important information about your rates” to ensure people opened the envelope.

The letter and brochure are shown below.

818 Pacific Highway, Gordon NSW 2072
Locked Bag 1006 Gordon NSW 2072
T 02 9424 0000 E krg@krg.nsw.gov.au
DX 8703 Gordon TTY 133 677
W www.krg.nsw.gov.au
ABN 86 408 856 411

Dear ratepayer

Funding better local infrastructure: have your say on rate increase options

Ku-ring-gai Council is facing significant financial challenges to renew and upgrade essential local infrastructure in line with community expectations.

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40%, but the amount of money collected through rates has only grown by 28%. This gap is largely due to NSW Government rate pegging, which limits how much revenue councils can collect from rates each year.

In addition, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite Council having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

This is reducing Council's capacity to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure, including buildings, stormwater and drainage, parks and recreational facilities, footpaths, roads and more. This infrastructure has been deteriorating for generations due to inadequate funding.

If this situation continues, the quality of infrastructure will continue to decline, with Council required to spend increasing amounts on temporary repairs. At the same time, independent research tells us that there is strong support for high-quality local infrastructure.

As a result, Council is seeking your feedback on four options:

- Base case – Deteriorating Infrastructure (an assumed 3% increase in rates in line with the NSW Government rate peg)
- Renew Infrastructure (22% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg)
- Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (29% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg)
- Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (33% increase in rates, including an assumed 3% rate peg).

Learn more and have your say

The enclosed brochure provides more information on these options, including how they may impact your rates and how you can have your say. We are seeking community feedback by **Sunday, 31 August 2025**.

You can get the facts and find out more at **www.krg.nsw.gov.au/srv** or by scanning the QR Code on this page

FUNDING BETTER LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Have your say on rate increase options

Ku-ring-gai Council is seeking your feedback on rate increase options to address the long-standing deterioration of local infrastructure. Generations of underinvestment have left approximately 20% of assets in poor or very poor condition. Compared to other Sydney councils, Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per resident is lower than average. This limits our ability to fund necessary upgrades.

The summary table below outlines how these rate increase options could provide additional funding for different infrastructure areas. See inside for more detailed information.

	Base Case – No Special Rate Variation	Special Rate Variation Options		
	Deteriorating Infrastructure (Option 1)	Renew Infrastructure (Option 2)	Renew and Enhance Infrastructure (Option 3)	Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure (Option 4)
Total rate increase	3% (assumed)*	22%*	29%*	33%*
Stormwater drains	✗	✓	✓	✓
Buildings (e.g. halls and amenities)	✗	✓	✓	✓
Recreational facilities (e.g. sportsfields and parks)	✗	✓	✓✓	✓✓
Footpaths (fix existing)	✗	✓	✓	✓
Footpaths (build new)	✗	✗	✓	✓
Other infrastructure upgrades (e.g. traffic and transport)	✗	✗	✓	✓✓
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre	✗	✓	✓	✓
Marian Street Theatre	✗	✗	✗	✓

* All rate increases are inclusive of the NSW Government rate peg (assumed as 3%).

Find out more krg.nsw.gov.au/srv

What is the challenge for Council?

Ku-ring-gai Council is facing significant financial challenges to renew and upgrade essential local infrastructure in line with community expectations.

A growing gap between costs and revenue

Over the past decade, the cost of providing Council services has increased by 40%, but the amount of money collected through rates has only grown by 28%.

This gap is largely due to NSW Government rate pegging, which limits how much revenue councils can collect from rates each year.

Ku-ring-gai's total rates revenue per capita is below the Sydney average, despite having a large infrastructure portfolio to maintain.

The impact on local infrastructure

This is making it more difficult for Council to maintain, renew and upgrade $1.8 billion worth of local infrastructure, including buildings, stormwater and drainage, parks and recreational facilities, footpaths and more.

If this situation continues, the quality of infrastructure will continue to decline, with Council required to spend increasing amounts on temporary repairs. This is not an efficient way to allocate ratepayers' funds.

This infrastructure has been deteriorating for generations, due to decades of inadequate funding.

A commitment to quality infrastructure

Independent research tells us that there is strong support for high-quality local infrastructure.

As a result, Council is seeking feedback on four options, with three of these options increasing rates above the rate peg to help to ensure local infrastructure meets community expectations and modern standards.

Council will continue to run an efficient organisation and maximise revenue from grants and other sources.

Case study

Stormwater and drainage

More than 40% of Council's stormwater and drainage assets are in an unsatisfactory condition.

Some parts of Council's stormwater network have not been upgraded since being built a century ago, increasing the risk of localised flooding.

Without an additional funding source, Council's stormwater assets will continue to deteriorate.

Funding for major projects

As well as funding existing and new local infrastructure, a rate increase also has the potential to help fund two major projects – the St Ives Indoor Sports Centre and Marian Street Theatre at Killara.

Go to **krg.nsw.gov.au/srv** to find out more about these projects.

The infrastructure backlog is growing

About 20% of Council's local infrastructure is in a poor or very poor condition. The cost to renew this infrastructure is known as the infrastructure backlog.

Without additional funding, the infrastructure backlog is forecast to rise to $325 million over the next decade – an increase of nearly 40%.

Examples of where we are now

Around 250km of streets lack footpaths, and existing footpaths are deteriorating.

Limited funding to deliver traffic and transport improvements.

Limited funding to renew parks, sportsfields, courts and recreational facilities.

More than 50% of Ku-ring-gai's public buildings need to be refurbished, or demolished and rebuilt.

Examples of where we want to be

Improving accessibility by renewing existing footpaths, including removing trip hazards, and building new footpaths.

More traffic and transport improvements for safer journeys.

Better playing surfaces, lighting, pathways and fencing at sports and recreational facilities.

Buildings which meet modern access, amenity and energy-efficiency standards.

Have your say on these rate increase options

Council is seeking community feedback on four rate options. Three of these options involve a permanent increase in rates above the NSW Government rate peg (known as Special Rate Variations) to fund improved infrastructure outcomes.

See the back page for how you can have your say.

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
	Deteriorating Infrastructure Base Case – Rate peg only	**Renew Infrastructure** 22% increase in rates	**Renew and Enhance Infrastructure** 29% increase in rates	**Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure** 33% increase in rates
Description	No special rate variation. Will lead to decline in Council's infrastructure.	Council would be able to deliver improvements to existing stormwater, buildings, footpaths and recreational facilities. This option would also fund the loan for the construction of the St Ives Indoor Sports Centre.	As well as the improvements in the *Renew Infrastructure* option, Council would also be able to deliver additional recreational facility works and funding for new footpaths and other infrastructure upgrades (such as traffic and transport works).	As well as the improvements in the *Renew and Enhance Infrastructure* option, Council would also be able to deliver further infrastructure upgrades (including traffic projects) and fund the redevelopment and operation of the Marian Street Theatre.
2026/27 PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE[1]				
Assumed rate peg[2]	3%	3%	3%	3%
Special Rate Variation	0%	19%	26%	30%
Total	**3%** (assumed)	**22%**	**29%**	**33%**
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND UPGRADES[3] (indicative allocations)				
Stormwater and drainage	$0	$5.9m	$5.9m	$5.9m
Buildings (for example halls, amenities and pavilions)	$0	$6.7m	$6.7m	$6.7m
Recreational facilities (for example sportsfields, parks and open space)	$0	$1.5m	$2.1m	$2.1m
Footpaths (fix existing)	$0	$0.94m	$0.94m	$0.94m
Footpaths (build new)	$0	$0	$3.8m	$3.8m
Other infrastructure upgrades (for example traffic and transport works)	$0	$0	$1.7m	$2.4m
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MAJOR PROJECT FUNDING (indicative allocations)				
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$0	$1.46m[4]	$1.46m	$1.46m
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$0	$0	$0	$2.98m[5]
PROPOSED 2026/27 INCREASE IN AVERAGE RATES[6]				
Residential rates	$52 (or $1 a week)	$378 (or $7.27 per week)	$499 (or $9.60 a week)	$568 (or $10.92 a week)
Business rates	$173 (or $3.33 a week)	$1,272 (or $24.46 per week)	$1,676 (or $32.23 a week)	$1,907 (or $36.68 a week)

1. For Special Rate Variation options, the proposed increase would be applied once in July 2026 and become a permanent part of Council's rate revenue. From July 2027 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg (Council estimates 3% per year). Tables projecting average rate amounts and increases over the coming four years under all options can be accessed at krg.nsw.gov.au/srv
2. Assumed NSW Government rate peg in 2026/27. The rate peg is expected to be announced by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in September-October 2025.
3. Note that the Special Rate Variation options do not include roads renewal because sufficient funding is currently in place to deliver works such as resurfacing and kerb and guttering improvements to reduce the infrastructure backlog for roads renewal over time.
4. Once the loan is repaid in 2031/32, funding will be diverted to other infrastructure upgrades to be determined by the budget process.
5. Once the loan is repaid in 2045/46, most funding (excluding payments for operating subsidy) will be diverted to other infrastructure upgrades to be determined in the budget process.
6. These are average rate increases. Actual increases will vary, depending on property values including official valuation changes.

Learn more and have your say

You are invited to have your say about the rate increase options.
Feedback closes on **31 August 2025**.

Have your say

Go to **krg.nsw.gov.au/srv** to:

- Get more information about the options.
- Fill out an online survey.
- Register to attend:
  - An online forum on Tuesday 29 July; and
  - An in-person public forum on Wednesday 13 August.

Drop-in sessions

You can also talk to Council staff at the following drop-in sessions:

- Saturday 2 August at Gordon Library from 10am-12pm. Translators in Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean will be available.
- Thursday 28 August at St Ives Shopping Village from 2-4pm.

Registration is not required for these events.

Submissions

Submissions can be:

- Mailed to Ku-ring-gai Council, Locked Bag 1006, Gordon NSW 2072 (quote reference number S14747-2)
- Emailed to srv@krg.nsw.gov.au

Privacy

Submissions from the general public may be included in Council reports. Personal details will be removed.

Questions

You can contact us by either emailing srv@krg.nsw.gov.au or phoning 9424 0000.

Information in your language

Simplified Chinese

Ku-ring-gai市议会正在就提高市政费的方案征求公众意见。

您可以在8月2日（星期六）上午10点至中午12点前往Gordon图书馆参加社区咨询会，与市议会工作人员讨论该项目。活动现场将提供普通话传译服务，无需预约登记

Traditional Chinese

Ku-ring-gai市政府正在就提高市政稅的多個選項徵求回饋意見。您可以在8月2日（星期六）上午10時至正午12時在Gordon圖書館舉行的社區公開會議上與市政府員工討論此項目。該活動將設粵語口譯服務。無需預先登記。.

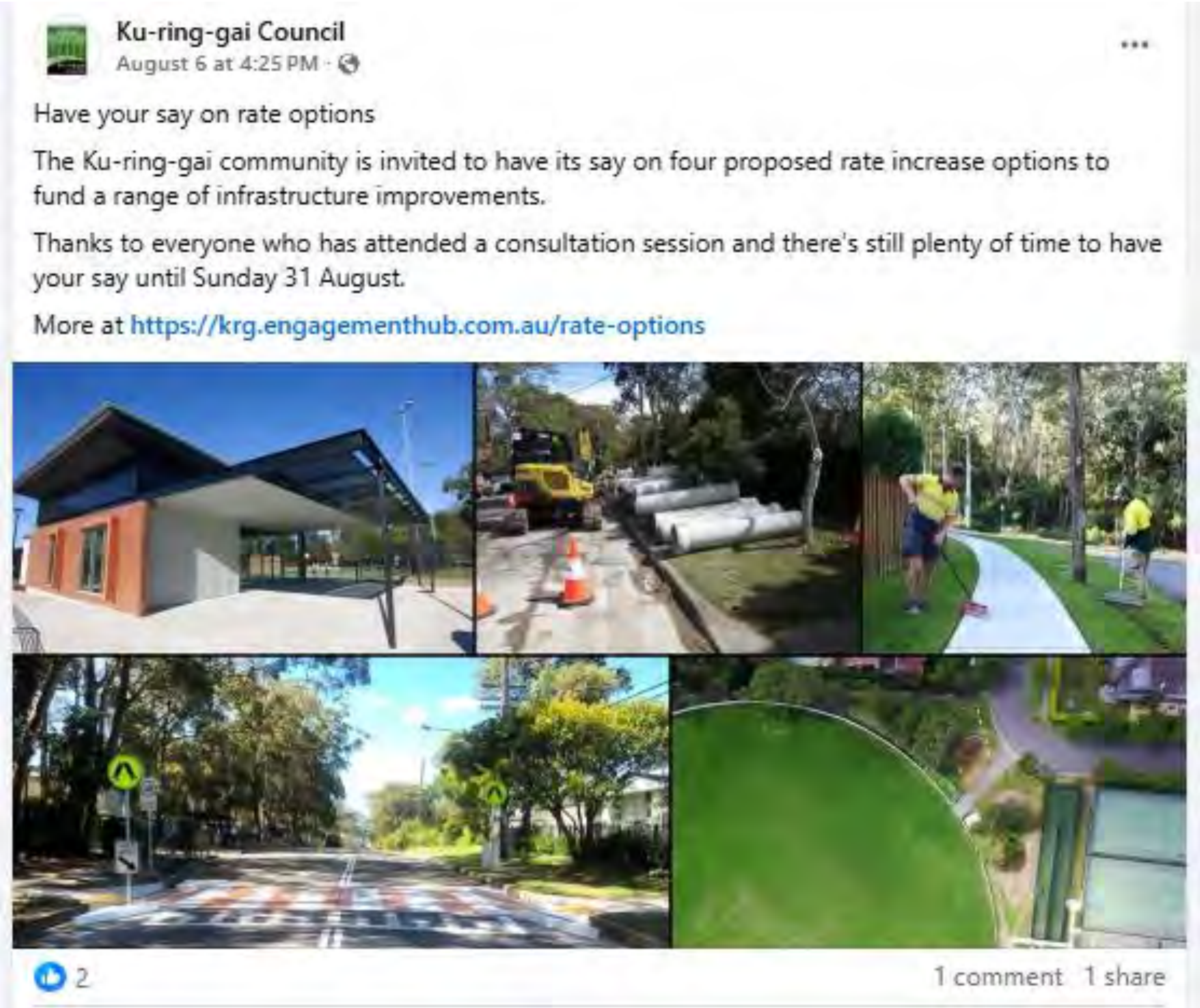
Korean

쿠링가이 카운슬에서는 카운슬 요금 인상에 대한 선택 방안에 관련한 피드백을 구하고 있습니다. 고든 도서관에서 8월 2일 토요일, 오전 10시부터 12시까지 열리는 커뮤니티 드롭인 세션에서 이 프로젝트에 관해 카운슬 직원과 대화를 나눌 수 있습니다. 한국어 번역사가 있으며, 사전 등록은 필요하지 않습니다.

Have your say by midnight on **Sunday 31 August 2025.**
Scan the QR Code to find out more or visit **krg.nsw.gov.au/srv**

Social media posts

On 6 August, Council issued a Facebook post on the rate increase options. This had a post reach of 2,178 social media users.


Ku-ring-gai Council
August 6 at 4:25 PM ·

Have your say on rate options

The Ku-ring-gai community is invited to have its say on four proposed rate increase options to fund a range of infrastructure improvements.

Thanks to everyone who has attended a consultation session and there's still plenty of time to have your say until Sunday 31 August.

More at https://krg.engagementhub.com.au/rate-options

2 1 comment 1 share

A second post on 29 August had a reach of 4,800 social media users.

Fact sheets

Four fact sheets were prepared on each rate increase option. These fact sheets were available for download on the engagement page, and also printed and made available at in-person engagement events. These fact sheets are shown below.

OPTION 1 | BASE CASE – NO SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Deteriorating Infrastructure

This is a 'business as usual' option based on Council's current financial operating model for the next ten years.

2026/27 PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE	
Assumed rate peg[1]	3%
Special Rate Variation	0%
Total (assumed)	**3%**
ANNUAL ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR RENEWAL AND UPGRADES	
Stormwater and drainage	$0
Buildings (E.g. halls, amenities and pavilions)	$0
Recreational facilities (E.g. sports fields, parks and open space)	$0
Footpaths – fix existing	$0
Footpaths – build new	$0
Other infrastructure upgrades (E.g. traffic and transport works)	$0
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MAJOR PROJECT FUNDING	
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$0
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$0
OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES	
Infrastructure backlog in 2023/24[2]	$227m
Infrastructure backlog in 2034/35	$325m
POTENTIAL INCREASE IN AVERAGE RATES	
Average 2026/27 residential rate increase	$52 ($1 per week)
Average 2026/27 business rate increase	$173 ($3.33 per week)

1. Assumed NSW Government rate peg in 2026/27. The rate peg is expected to be announced by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in September-October 2025.
2. Cost to bring local infrastructure to new condition.

What this will mean for your rates

Rates would increase annually in line with the NSW Government rate peg only.

Council is assuming the Government will set a rate peg of 3% in 2026/27, resulting in residential ratepayers paying an additional $52 (or $1 per week) in 2026/27.

Council's financial outlook

From 2026/27 to 2034/35, Council is expected to experience annual operating deficits (excluding capital grants) averaging $2.3 million per year.

This is because costs are expected to increase faster than revenue, and Council's budget will need to cover an annual $1.46 million loan repayment for the construction of the St Ives Indoor Sports Centre.

Impact on local infrastructure

Ongoing deficits mean Council would not be able to invest additional funds into asset maintenance and renewal.

This would lead to a significant increase in Council's infrastructure backlog (the cost to bring infrastructure to a new condition). This is estimated to increase from $227 million in 2023/24 to $325 million in 2034/35 (a 43% increase).

As a result, the quality of infrastructure will continue to decline, and Council will be required to spend increasing amounts on temporary repairs.

Infrastructure outcomes in this option

Buildings

Around half of Ku-ring-gai's buildings currently require refurbishment or rebuilding. Council would have limited ability to bring public buildings to community standards, including accessibility and energy efficiency.

Recreational facilities

Increased issues with deteriorating playing surfaces, sub-standard lighting, walkways and fencing. Reduced ability to upgrade parks and playgrounds.

Traffic and transport

Council would be less able to fund approved traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.

Stormwater

Much of Council's stormwater network consists of very old pipes that have never been renewed. Increased risk of localised flooding, road closures and contamination of local waterways. More potholes, subsidence and road repairs due a decline in asset performance.

Existing footpaths

About 20% of existing footpaths expected to fall into unsatisfactory condition in next decade. This would lead to a decline in accessibility and increased maintenance demands.

New footpaths

One in four streets across Ku-ring-gai (around 250km) currently have no footpath at all. At the current pace, it could take until the 2080s to complete footpaths on at least one side of every street, limiting safe and accessible walking routes for many residents.

Renew Infrastructure

This option proposes additional investment in local infrastructure to accelerate improvements to assets and community facilities and address the growing backlog.

2026/27 PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE	
Assumed rate peg	3%
Special Rate Variation	19%
Total[1]	**22%**
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL FUNDING FOR RENEWAL AND UPGRADES	
Stormwater and drainage	$5.9m
Buildings (E.g. halls, amenities and pavilions)	$6.7m
Recreational facilities (E.g. sports fields, parks and open space)	$1.5m
Footpaths – fix existing	$0.94m
Footpaths – build new	$0
Other infrastructure upgrades (E.g. traffic and transport works)	$0
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MAJOR PROJECT FUNDING	
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$1.46m
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$0
OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES	
Infrastructure backlog in 2023/24[2]	$227m
Infrastructure backlog in 2034/35	$175m
POTENTIAL INCREASE IN AVERAGE RATES[3]	
Average 2026/27 residential rate increase	$378 (or $7.27 a week)
Average 2026/27 business rate increase	$1,272 (or $24.46 a week)

1. The proposed increase would be applied once in July 2026 and become a permanent part of Council's rate revenue. From July 2027 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg (Council estimates 3% per year).
2. Cost to bring local infrastructure to new condition.
3. These are average rate increases. Actual increases will vary, depending on property value including official valuation changes.

What this would mean for your rates

Under this option, Council would increase rates by 22% in 2026/27. This would include a Special Rate Variation of 19% and an assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%.

This would result in an average increase of $378 (or $7.27 per week) for residential ratepayers in 2026/27.

From 2027/28 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg only.

Local infrastructure benefits

The rate increase would deliver an additional $16.5 million a year dedicated to renewing and upgrading existing local infrastructure. This funding would be allocated as follows:

- **$5.9 million for stormwater and drainage:** Improvements to kerb inlets, pipes and drains to reduce flooding risk and improve stormwater management. Council would seek to reline, rather than replace, pipes to save costs.
- **$6.7 million for community buildings:** Renewal and upgrade of buildings such as halls, public toilets and pavilions. Improvements would focus on improved safety, lighting, accessibility and women's facilities facilities.
- **$1.5 million for recreational facilities:** Improvements to playing surfaces, pathways, lighting, drainage and fencing at fields, courts, parks and open space.
- **$0.94 million for footpaths:** Improving the existing footpath network, including removing trip hazards and improving surfaces.

Council's infrastructure backlog (the cost to bring assets to a new condition) would reduce from $227 million in 2023/24 to $175 million in 2034/35 (a decrease of 23%).

Funding for the St Ives Indoor Sports Centre

This option would also fund $1.46 million a year in loan repayments for the construction of the St Ives Indoor Sports Centre. This centre is currently under construction in partnership with the NSW Government.

When complete in 2026, it will deliver four world-class multi-use courts, a community space, café and car parking for community use.

After the loan is repaid in 2031/32, this funding would be reallocated to other infrastructure renewal.

Compared to Option 1, Council can each year:

Buildings

Increase the number of buildings which are replaced or renewed from two to eight.

Recreational facilities

Fund additional recreational facility improvements, potentially including fencing, lighting, drainage and pathway works, and an additional sports field surface rejuvenation.

Stormwater

Boost by seven times the length of stormwater pipe renewal (from 900m to 6.9km).

Repair or replace over eight times more kerb inlet pits (from 30 to 250).

Existing footpaths

Repair and rebuild a two times greater area of existing footpaths, from 2.9km^2 to 6.5km^2

Renew and Enhance Infrastructure

This option represents a more significant investment in local infrastructure, designed to renew existing assets as well as extend the footpath network and fast track traffic, transport and other infrastructure projects.

2026/27 PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE	
Assumed rate peg	3%
Special Rate Variation	26%
Total[1]	**29%**
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL FUNDING FOR RENEWAL AND UPGRADES	
Stormwater and drainage	$5.9m
Buildings (E.g. halls, amenities and pavilions)	$6.7m
Recreational facilities (E.g. sports fields, parks and open space)	$2.1m
Footpaths – fix existing	$0.94m
Footpaths – build new	$3.8m
Other infrastructure upgrades (E.g. traffic and transport works)	$1.7m
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MAJOR PROJECT FUNDING	
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$1.46m
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$0
OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES	
Infrastructure backlog in 2023/24[2]	$227m
Infrastructure backlog in 2034/35	$174m
POTENTIAL INCREASE IN AVERAGE RATES[3]	
Average 2026/27 residential rate increase	$499 (or $9.60 a week)
Average 2026/27 business rate increase	$1,676 (or $32.23 a week)

1. The proposed increase would be applied once in July 2026 and become a permanent part of Council's rate revenue. From July 2027 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg (Council estimates 3% per year).
2. Cost to bring local infrastructure to new condition
3. These are average rate increases. Actual increases will vary, depending on property value including official valuation changes.

What this would mean for your rates

Under this option, Council would increase rates by 29% in 2026/27. This would include a Special Rate Variation of 26% and an assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%.

This would result in an average increase of $499 (or $9.60 per week) for residential ratepayers in 2026/27.

From 2027/28 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg only.

Local infrastructure benefits

The rate increase would deliver an additional $22.6 million a year. This option would deliver all the benefits of the Renew Infrastructure option (Option 2), plus the following:

- A further $600,000 for renewal of existing recreational facilities.
- $3.8 million for new footpaths, with a focus on areas of high pedestrian traffic, including near transport hubs, shops, schools, hospitals, nursing homes and parks.
- $1.7 million for traffic, transport and other infrastructure works.

Council's infrastructure backlog, which is the cost to bring its assets to a new condition, would reduce from $227 million in 2023/24 to $174 million in 2034/35 (a decrease of 23%).

In addition to Option 2, Council can each year:

New footpaths

Build new footpaths on around 40 streets, a significant increase from the current 12-14 streets per year. This would ensure all streets have a footpath on at least one side by 2045 (instead of 2082 without this funding).

Traffic and transport

Dedicate $1.7 million to other infrastructure upgrades, including traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.

Recreational facilities

Deliver additional recreational facility improvements, and the potential for an extra sports field surface rejuvenation.

OPTION 4 | SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure

This option would represent a significant investment in community infrastructure and enable the reconstruction of a landmark arts and cultural facility.

2026/27 PROPOSED RATE REVENUE INCREASE	
Assumed rate peg	3%
Special Rate Variation	30%
Total[1]	**33%**
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL FUNDING FOR RENEWAL AND UPGRADES	
Stormwater and drainage	$5.9m
Buildings (E.g. halls, amenities and pavilions)	$6.7m
Recreational facilities (E.g. sports fields, parks and open space)	$2.1m
Footpaths – fix existing	$0.94m
Footpaths – build new	$3.8m
Other infrastructure upgrades (E.g. traffic and transport works)	$2.4m
ADDITIONAL ANNUAL MAJOR PROJECT FUNDING	
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre construction loan	$1.46m
Marian Street Theatre construction loan and operating subsidy	$2.98m
OVERALL INFRASTRUCTURE OUTCOMES	
Infrastructure backlog in 2023/24[2]	$227m
Infrastructure backlog in 2034/35	$181m
POTENTIAL INCREASE IN AVERAGE RATES[3]	
Average 2026/27 residential rate increase	$568 (or $10.92 a week)
Average 2026/27 business rate increase	$1,907 (or $36.68 a week)

1. The proposed increase would be applied once in July 2026 and become a permanent part of Council's rate revenue. From July 2027 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg (Council estimates 3% per year).
2. Cost to bring local infrastructure to new condition.
3. These are average rate increases. Actual increases will vary, depending on property value including official valuation changes.

What this would mean for your rates

Under this option, Council would increase rates by 33% in 2026/27. This would include a Special Rate Variation of 30% and assumed NSW Government rate peg of 3%.

This would result in an average increase of $568 (or $10.92 per week) for residential ratepayers in 2026/27.

From 2027/28 onwards, rates would increase in line with the NSW Government rate peg only.

Local infrastructure benefits

This option would deliver an additional $26.3 million a year in infrastructure funding.

It would deliver all the benefits of the Renew and Enhance Infrastructure option (Option 3), along with an additional $700,000 for traffic, transport and other infrastructure upgrades.

It will also deliver $2.98 million a year to service a $30.36 million loan to build the Marian Street Theatre project, and then subsidise the theatre's operation. This project would create a vibrant, multi-use arts venue with a strong focus on drama, featuring multiple rehearsal and performance spaces.

Once this loan is fully repaid in 2045/46, this funding (excluding the operating subsidy) would be redirected to other infrastructure renewal and upgrade works.

Council's infrastructure backlog (the estimated cost to bring Council's assets to a new condition), would decrease from $227 million in 2023/24 to $181 million in 2034/35. This represents a decrease of 20%.

In addition to Option 3, Council can:

Traffic and transport

Spend an additional $700,000 on other infrastructure upgrades each year, including traffic and transport works.

Marian Street Theatre redevelopment at Killara

Current Marian Street Theatre site (left) and artist's impression of proposed redevelopment (right).

Artist's impressions of internal and external areas at proposed Marian Street Theatre redevelopment.

Council and library survey displays

Displays were created in Council's four libraries, and at the Council chambers at Gordon, providing brochures and hard copies of surveys, along with a box where community members could lodge surveys. These displays were created to allow people to be able to lodge surveys, even if they didn't have access to – or were unable to use – the internet.

Flyer

A flyer was printed and distributed to Council venues, including the Council Chamber at Gordon and all libraries. This flyer is shown below.

Ku-ring-gai Council is facing significant financial challenges to renew and upgrade essential local infrastructure in line with community expectations.

If this situation continues, the quality of infrastructure will continue to decline, with Council required to spend increasing amounts on temporary repairs.

As a result, Council is seeking your feedback on four options.

BASE CASE – NO SPECIAL RATE VARIATION	
Option 1	Deteriorating Infrastructure
SPECIAL RATE VARIATION OPTIONS	
Option 2	Renew Infrastructure
Option 3	Renew and Enhance Infrastructure
Option 4	Renew, Enhance and Expand Infrastructure

The Special Rate Variation options will deliver a range of infrastructure improvements, including for stormwater, footpaths, recreational facilities, community buildings and traffic and transport.

Have your say by 31 August 2025.

To find out more scan the QR code or visit
krg.nsw.gov.au/srv

Attachment B: Engagement activities

29 July online forum

On 29 July, some 24 community members took part in an online forum. Council staff provided a presentation and then verbally responded to written questions.

The following questions are comments were made, with some participants lodging multiple questions and comments:

- *“So, the Council's sudden interest in an ‘infrastructure backlog' is just coincidental with the State government's policy of letting the developers loose in Ku-ring-gai? Is that the case?”*
- *“Is there a list of work that you say needs to be done? Where are these works situated? How can ratepayers access this list?”*
- *“Your second point (cost shifting) from the key financial challenges you state that responsibilities are pushed onto councils. So how is it then fair for the council to push the cost onto ratepayers? We are not getting refund from the State nor Federal Government.”*
- *“You are making a comparison of land increase to increase in rates. I find this comparison odd. the increase in land value does not equate to increase in earnings as such for the residents. It is a ‘dead’ asset. So explain this comparison?”*
- *“On the Pacific Highway (Between Ryde Road and Telegraph Road) there are so many pot-holes. It has been repaired multiple times but it continues to develop some occurs within 3 months of repair. What is the council doing to improve the quality of the infrastructure. Projects/repairs like the example above shows poor value for money.*
- *“What are the deliverables of this ‘rate increase’ proposal?”*
- *“It is easy to say ‘better’ infrastructure. I would appreciate a definition of ‘better’*
- *“The number of staff per x residents is useful. However a missing stat in this regard is the average cost of staff per comparable average cost of staff in other councils”*
- *"To arrive at these assumptions did you have an inventory of the Assets and assessed the priority based on risk, urgency, return on investment etc?*
- *“Surely not all are equally bad."*
- *“How has the increased volume of rate payers in Ku-ring-gai through development of multi dwelling residences affected income and funding of the discussed items?”*
- *“You spend $318.99 of my rates on cultural programs. Why don't you adopt the solution of just addressing core responsibilities like rubbish collection and looking after the physical environment, instead of charging me more?”*
- *“How much did you spend on the independent consultant?”*
- *"The projects presented are ‘projects’ they are one off costs with (surely) less than the proposed rate increase ongoing. How can the council justify the ongoing base rate increase of such a large amount?”*
- *“When project starts (such as the St Ives indoor sports centre) a funding source should have been secured. How was this deficit missed in the planning and now the ratepayers have to carry?"*
- *Option 2 sporting facilities slide - the photos show some changes to ovals, but these seem unnecessary to me.”*
- *“I don’t understand the need for permanent SRV rate when stormwater drains, footpaths and building are not ‘infinite’. Surely a time will come when all renewals have been done. For example, I have my house, which also needs renewals and repairs but if money is spend on doing say a repair to a certain part of the house, it does not mean that I have to do it every year. These are prioritised. Council should also do*

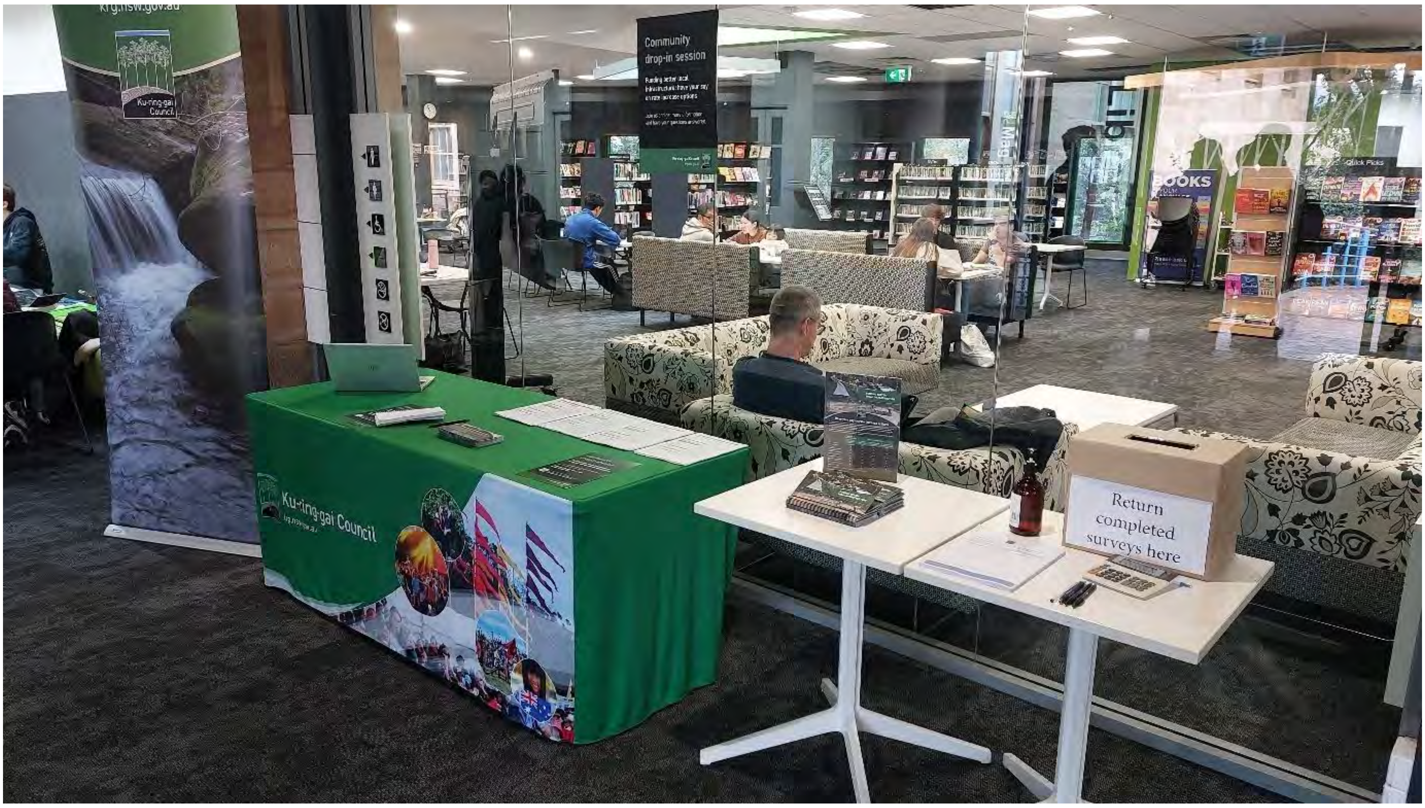
the same. I object to a permanent increase. I need to see the full list of assets that are considered poor and how much is needed for each."

- *"Can I ask what consultation was done for the Marian Street Theatre? And reflecting my question above why was this done as a loan rather than outright secured funding scheme. Wouldn't this just drive us to further rate increases in the future? This is non-essential compared to other essentials you've listed like the stormwater pipes"*
- *"Are the plans to implement an accountability regime to ensure what rate payers commit to paying in additional rates is injected into the proposed works? For example, implementing a transparent reporting system available to rate payers to view what specifically council is working on each year (rather than the current very high level reporting)."*
- *"I would prefer an additional option: One without any expansion but purely focusing on the essentials (stormwater and roads). Additional infrastructure such as the St Ives Sports Park or the Theatre should all be stopped until the essentials are serviced."*
- *"I believe there is an option between 1 and 2, if council can identify areas that need attention based on the condition, risk, return on investment, estimated increase of revenue from the new housing policy, looking at efficiencies"*
- *"I don't understand how an infrastructure backlog of this magnitude been allowed to build up? Why has a SRV not been introduced in earlier years instead of a steep 19% increase now?"*
- *"You say you have a high emergency services levy. Your information is general - what was the actual amount?*
- *"No, you say there is a backlog - you must know what the works are. What works you do is irrelevant."*
- *"Infrastructure requirements have been known for ages with some infrastructure never being maintained Why has a SRV not been lodged previous.? Basically, the current residents are being financially hitting for undercharging previous residents? Also, wasn't this shortfall picked up in the audits?"*
- *"The response to the second question re do you have list of the assets, shows how this project has been handled. What should happen first is to identify the Assets based on the current conditions, the risk, etc etc This is a repeat of a point I have been making."*
- *"There is a very serious stormwater drainage issue in front of my house, and according to the survey from council staff, there is a defect for the gutter and kerb which are built by council back to that time, but the staff asked us to fix it on our own cost. So how can you make sure the extra charge will be used properly and on the right place."*
- *"You mentioned that development costs are not covering development income. Why is this so? With all the proposed development, are current residents funding infrastructure shortfall?"*
- *"I don't understand your link between the wealth in the area and rates amounts collected? Why should these two necessarily correlate?*
- *"Option 1 is 3% increase and option 2 is 22%. The gap is too big. Is there other option between 3% and 22%. Can the council provide more options like 10%, 15% and 20% with details.*
- *"In the proposed options there is a large increase from 3% to 22%. Is there a case for an intermediate increase between 3% and 22% for example 12%?*
- *"The independent consultant whom you employed to assess what the backlog works were.*
- *"The potential TOD and rezoning will definitely cause heavy burdens to current infrastructures, should the developers and state gov take the responsibilities for that?*
- *"Given the huge number of multi-dwellings pushed by NSW Gov (and to some extent the council), why aren't property developers hit with high fees to enable improvements to infrastructure. Surely, the additional dwellings are going to seriously impact our infrastructure. Of course, since the NSW Government are pushing for the increase in dwellings, why aren't they funding the necessary infrastructure to manage the huge increase to the area."*

- *“Given the apparent dire financial position, have you considered selling any non-core assets?”*
- *“Please expand on the response to my question on permanent vs temporary SRV. Your response talked about ongoing maintenance and assets have a lifetime. So from what I have heard Council have not done any of these ‘renewals’ for some years. Now if these have lasted that many x years without attention and now we need this huge funding? I am really struggling to understand this permanent rate increase. Having worked in a corporate world this is quite strange to me.”*
- *"Hypothetically let’s say the council receives the funding it requires from the rate increase and has the funding. What is the long-term financial plan of the council? i.e. is there an option to invest in future renewals rather than expanding (continue to build). This will ensure a more sustainable future with the infrastructure we have, maintained rather than building new infrastructures that cannot be maintained in the long run"*
- *“If assets were reaching end-of-useful-life then shouldn't a reserve have been built up in previous years through smaller rate increases?”*
- *“Are there specific initiatives to reduce costs? Why should we assume that all rate increases are permanent?*
- *“Surely the Asset Management Strategy is a key audit focus area as it is a key focus of local government. I still don't understand how we are at this poor financial position. You have the useful life of the assets. You should have been putting aside funds to cover this.”*
- *“I’m sorry, if I have not hitherto looked at the website. Is this information about, detailed analysis of the assets etc available for review and study?*
- *“Your avoidance of answering my question is not good enough - how much did you spend on the independent consultant whom you employed to assess the infrastructure work?”*
- *“Is the proposed increased intended to be one-off or is it proposed to increase the level of rates forever at the higher level?*
- *“Then keep extending the Temporary increases as needed. … and not impose a permanent increase.”*
- *“Are there any cost estimates on infrastructure as our climate changes?”*
- *“Has there been an enquiry into mismanagement of changing natural grass into artificial turf at the West Pymble oval near Bicentennial Park?*
- *“Thank you all for your time today! I don't think I made your job easy tonight but appreciate the effort and your ongoing dedication and service to the residents of Ku-ring-gai. Looking forward to a solution for the future!”*

2 August drop-in session

On Saturday 2 August, 22 people attended a drop-in session at the Gordon Library foyer to ask questions about the rate increase options. Korean, Cantonese and Mandarin interpreters were available.



13 August in-person engagement event

On 13 August 2025, 16 community members attended an in-person engagement forum at the Gordon Council Chamber. Staff gave a presentation, which is available at this link, and then took questions and received comments from community members.

The following comments were received:

- *Council needs to be transparent about how it's spending money*
- *Concern about cost of staff and councillor offsite workshop*
- *Both support about the Marian St Theatre, but also concern about the operational subsidy*
- *Concern about Council's capacity to deliver infrastructure projects, given Norman Griffiths Oval issue.*
- *Concern that Council ran a large surplus (including capital grants and contributions) in 2023/24, and has available cash, yet is asking for a rate rise.*

The following questions were received:

- *Why there isn't an 'in-between' option between 3-22%, given cost of living pressures?*
- *Rationale for the options, given they deliver only a 23-25% backlog reduction over ten years*
- *Will Council lobby to rate private schools?*
- *Where is Council's other revenue coming from and have asset sales been included in its financial plan?*
- *Will Council get revenue from new high-rise development (rates and/or contributions)?*
- *What will happen to the Marian St Theatre if Option 4 is not supported?*

- *Are asset sales an option to fund Marian St Theatre?*
- *How are you seeking to reduce costs?*
- *Will you publish the surveys?*
- *Will Council use day labour or contractors to deliver works?*
- *How did Council get to this financial state?*
- *Are you surveying ratepayers only, or ratepayers and residents?*

Staff answered these questions and received the comments.

18 August 2025 recruited workshop

On 18 August, some 34 community members, who were randomly-selected, took part in a workshop at the Council Chambers at Gordon to discuss Council's financial challenges and the rate increase options. Of these participants:

- 32 were property owners and two were renters
- Four were from Wahroonga Ward, five from Comenarra Ward, seven from St Ives Ward, 9 from Gordon Ward and 9 from Roseville Ward
- There were a range of age groups represented, from 18-34 to 65 plus, and a roughly equal split between female and male community members.

Following the first half of a presentation, participants were divided into tables asked to nominate Council's financial challenges, to ascertain the community's viewpoint on this issue.

Table feedback on Council's financial challenges

Challenge	Number of times mentioned
Age of infrastructure	4
Less income from business	2
Small / less dense population	2
Construction costs	2
High non-rateable bushland areas	1
Cost-shifting from State	1
High overheads	1
Inability to get grants	1
Large blocks	1
Ageing population with limited income	1
Small / less dense population (x2)	1
Construction costs (x2)	1
Poor Council management, which is now leading to ratepayers to foot costs	1
By increasing density you can increase revenue	1
Increase in building compliance codes	1
Council has a monopoly and tends to abuse this situation	1
High cost increases	1
How do you value different assets and choose which one should be prioritised?	1
Low rates per capita	1
No CBD	1
Little paid parking	1
Need for a third party review of capital expenditure	1
Inequitable distribution of capital works – some streets and areas receive more	1
Low income relative to other councils	1

Following the second half of the presentation, participants were then asked to outline the pros and cons of each rate increase option.

The feedback from all tables is outlined below. Where the same item was mentioned multiple times by different tables, this is indicated.

Option 1 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Low cost (x5)	Low reward – Council area will go backwards (x3)
Will force Council to find other revenue and efficiencies (x3)	Stormwater decline
Less shock to the community	No sport improvement
Less backlash	Future generations will pay more (x2)
Government may increase rate peg	Property values will decline as Council area declines (x3)
	Increase in backlog
	Potential for more debt
	More injuries in public areas
	Poor decision-making
	No significant upgrades
	Increased cost of temporary repairs

Option 2 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Lowest Special Rate Variation option / lesser impact on ratepayers (x2)	Why did Council commit to St Ives Indoor Sports Centre before getting rates revenue to pay for it? (x2)
Stormwater benefits (x2)	Potentially more important things to spend money on than buildings
Tackles the backlog	Only a patch fix
Infrastructure will look better	Burden on ageing population that has been artificially small
Solves some infrastructure problems	No real improvement
More maintenance	Options on table are not reflective of community needs
No new speed humps	Too much of a burden on existing, not new, residents – developer contributions should be funding more
Buildings improved	More money to mismanage
Funds Indoor Sports Centre	Limited new footpaths (x2)
Upgrades existing footpaths	No other infrastructure upgrades
	There is a need for an option between 3% and 22%

Option 3 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Increase funds for traffic	More infrastructure investment requires upkeep / depreciation
More footpaths	State vs Council road responsibility
Cheapest option that will tackle backlog and provide new infrastructure	Why hasn't this been done before
Solves existing and new infrastructure problem	High costs per person
More recreation facilities	Limited options for other projects
New footpaths / gutters	Options on table are not reflective of community needs

More pedestrian crossings	Too much of a burden on existing, not new, residents – developer contributions should be funding more
More value for money	Council needs to cut internal costs instead
	More speed humps
	Not much difference to Option 2

Option 4 pros and cons

Pros	**Cons**
Increase in business rate	Very high costs (x2)
More transport infrastructure	Marian St Theatre costs – site should be sold instead (x3)
Safer access for the community	Two individual major projects doesn't reflect resident need – Council should think more laterally
Will increase property value	Marian St loan and debt (by the time loan is repaid building will require more work)
Represents bold vision for the future	Pensioner stress
Marian St Theatre for our grandchildren	Shock to people
Most people can afford to pay this	Options on table are not reflective of community needs
Utilise assets	Too much of a burden on existing, not new, residents – developer contributions should be funding more
	Marian St Theatre too costly – need to examine user pays
	Can Council borrow $200m instead and have a lower rate increase?
	Expand current infrastructure ie: sports centre
	Too many speed humps
	Increase for Marian St Theatre should only be limited to the term of the loan

Tables were then asked to rank the options, from most to least preferred. Most tables were supportive of a Special Rate Variation increase option.

Option ranking by table

Table	**Most preferred**	**Second most preferred**	**Third most preferred**	**Least preferred**
1	29% increase (Option 3)	Equal - 33% increase (Option 4) and 3% increase (Option 1)		22% increase (Option 2)
2	33% increase (Option 4)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	3% increase (Option 1)
3	3% increase (Option 1)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)
4	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	3% increase (Option 1)	No vote
5	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	33% increase (Option 4)	3% increase (Option 1)

Tables were asked to record the reason for their preferences. These are listed below:

Table	Reason for preference ranking
1	Council should ask the highest option (Option 4) and then it may get Option 3 as the worst case
2	Council should be accountable for its expenditure, including projects to be agreed with the community and expenditure to be limited to the project asset classification. No spending on litigation.
3	Special Rate Variation increases are too high
4	Problem won't go away – we need to address it
5	This group was on the fence with Option 2 and 3. Would like to see tangible results. For example, when the loan for the Sports Centre is paid off, where does the money get redirected?

Council asked participants whether they were aware of the rate increase option engagement activity, before they attended the workshop. Some 78% of participants said they were aware.

Council then asked participants whether they were aware any Special Rate Variation (SRV) would be permanent. Of the participants who were aware of the engagement activity, some 57% said they were aware the SRV would be permanent.

Council then asked participants for any other matters it should consider when progressing the project. The following comments were made:

- *Consider financial contributions from corporations in return for naming/ signage of toilet/ sports facilities.*
- *Consult people on exactly what they want the increase to go to rather than packaging into fixed options and allow people to vote for what rate increase should be prioritised for.*
- *Allow a new option to be inserted after Option 1 and before Option 2 so that there is a rate increase around 10% offered as well. Rather than a jump from 3 to 22% as only options.*
- *Council should address critical necessity before any enhancement proposals/ projects*
- *Consult people on fixed versus permanent SRV as many including younger generations will not be accepting of permanent rate increase as it does not promote accountability.*
- *Transparency in strategic expenditure planning and allocation.*
- *The option I preferred tonight was 2, as I agree need to renew existing infrastructure but the' enhance in 3 or 4 feels like ambit claim and does not present as increasing amenity for ratepayers in general - eg St Ives sports centre good for families with kids at the school or involved in basketball … who else?*
- *Clear comms where the money was spent and will be spent.*
- *Update on the progresses.*
- *Active engagement of feedback from community.*
- *Review on capital expenditure to identify potential savings.*
- *Identify where the money that went to completed projects will go.*
- *More info on St Ives and Marian St as part of the pitch, with comparisons to similar facilities and potential benefits.*
- *Continuous discussion.*
- *Community must know what Council is doing. Community consultation required to prioritise projects.*
- *People need to learn to within their means and do what the governments will tell you to do.*
- *Why are there fixed rates? Why can't there be small incremental increases? Eg 5% increase each year until everything is good. Then decrease slightly when necessary.*
- *With the Long Term projections of remediation and works, I feel that the changing demographics and community needs should be planned for.*
- *Petition advocacy from LGNSW for assistance with infrastructure funding from the NSW Government.*
- *Lobby Commonwealth Government to increase infrastructure funding to 2%*
- *It is obvious that the very low population in KRG, which is also ageing, is contributing to the funding shortfall. Suggest looking at real options to increase density which would decrease average population age and increase revenue.*
- *If increased rates are approved by part, they MUST NOT be spent on litigation.*
- *Consider reduction after loan is paid off for st ives. Less speed humps.*
- *Better budgeting and less unnecessary expenses*
- *Just be ruthless in prioritization of what infrastructure is fixed and manage it within the current budget.*
- *Asking for a 22% increase is outrageous.*

- *Consider the excessive cost of housing in this area by allowing big blocks to subdivide so you get families can build smaller houses. No one wants more apartments.*
- *Option 4 lock it in and get the area thriving, best things for property values and community entertainment.*
- *Clearer explanations of how current capital expenditure and repairs are costed compared to new plans. Consider a plan based purely on maintenance vs additional works.*
- *The very unique nature of the area with natural beauty and vegetation.*
- *Consult with the community on where the funding should go.*
- *Not enough businesses in Ku-ring-gai - should be encouraged. Business rates are fairly low.*
- *Consider and prioritise the upgrade of existing infrastructure needed.*
- *Independent review of both operational and capital expenditure and publish results to rate payers to ensure all avenues have been exhausted.*
- *Continue resident awareness sessions. Possibly do outbound calls*
- *Council has to be visible. Let residents know what council is doing, what has been achieved.*
- *People need to know priorities. Not repairing the same road when others are at stage 4 and 5 - below average and in a poor state."*
- *Help people understand what their money will do to improve our amenity of living in this area.*
- *This is not a 'project'*
- *Council seems averse to moving ahead with medium height builds near train stations, particularly along Pacific Highway. This could allow 1 to 2 levels of business, then residential on top. Increases both business and residential rate increases, with small footprints.*
- *Clarify the impact of increase in rates revenue to rate holders is not 3% but averaged of 3% and proposed increase is higher than 22%, 29% or 33%*
- *Overall we need to maintain the infrastructure, period. I encourage to move ahead.*
- *No rate increase, increase density of housing to increase rates*
- *Reduce funding to community groups and activists.*
- *Get the basics such as drainage* and maintenance under control before over reaching into infrastructure that Council can't afford.

21 August 2025 recruited workshop

On 21 August, a further 34 community members, who were randomly-selected, took part in a workshop at the Council Chambers at Gordon to discuss Council's financial challenges and the rate increase options.

Of these participants:

- 32 were property owners and two were renters
- Six were from Wahroonga Ward, eight from Comenarra Ward, seven from St Ives Ward, five from Gordon Ward and eight from Roseville Ward
- There were a range of age groups represented, from 18-34 to 65 plus, and an equal split between female and male community members.

Following the first half of a presentation, participants were divided into tables asked to nominate Council's financial challenges, to ascertain the community's viewpoint on this issue.

Table feedback on Council's financial challenges

Challenge	Number of times mentioned
Cost shifting	2
Need for developers to pay fees for infrastructure	2
Decision-making and community engagement process on funding allocation	2
Efficiency and capability of management in relation to expenditure	2
Ageing population	1
Community standards	1
Restrictions on subdivisions and development approval	1
Using grants within financial year	1
Rate pegging	1
Cost of living	1
Time delay between increase in population and infrastructure delivery	1
Building new infrastructure instead of renewing existing infrastructure	1
Mismatch between resident concerns and Council infrastructure planning	1
Need for sale and lease of Council assets	1
Councils needs to attract more commercial businesses	1
Spending on consultants	1
Council printing of materials	1
Lack of business rates and business development strategy	1
Need to educate community about financial issues	1
Lack of productivity and efficiency	1
Prioritise spending existing budget	1

Following the second half of the presentation, participants were then asked to outline the pros and cons of each rate increase option. The feedback from all tables is outlined below. Where the same item was mentioned multiple times by different tables, this is indicated.

Option 1 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Relatively less expensive (x5)	Increased infrastructure backlog (x3)
"Least worst option"	"Kicking the can down the road"
Avoid community backlash	Potential Council liability costs / safety issues (x2)
Minimal work carried out	Doesn't address basic needs
Makes Council be efficient	Not the same as rate of inflation
Council to fund alternative funding sources	Deteriorating assets (x2)
Reduced property prices	Reduction in standard of living
	Community less likely to use recreational facilities
	Increased flooding
	Increased insurance costs

Option 2 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Potential reduction in insurance risks and claims for damage to private property from stormwater (x2)	Cost of living impacts
Reduce Council backlog and future Council costs (3)	Little improvement for community
Deals with future loan costs (x2)	Increase is permanent
New footpaths	Big rate increase from Option 1 (x2)

Affordable compared to Options 3 and 4	Why fund a school sports centre
	Doesn't provide new footpaths
	Lack of user pays
	Public safety not addressed
	Recreation facilities under-funded
	Still a backlog
	Less incentive for Council to be efficient
	New sporting facilities being prioritised over infrastructure safety
	No confidence Council will deliver the projects
	Over capitalisation in buildings asset class
	No new infrastructure

Option 3 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Some new community assets	Permanent increase
Council more financially efficient	Project and capital allocation
Maintenance improvement	Doesn't provide additional funding for existing footpaths, buildings and drainage
Key infrastructure needs addressed	Marian St not addressed
Extra recreation facilities	No transparency over existing spend
Improved standard of living	Lack of user pays
Cheaper than Option 3	Norman Griffiths not finished
Reduce Council debt	More expensive
Safety improvements	Reduces incentive for Council to be efficient
Addresses community needs	No guarantee of outcomes and expenditure
Balances spending on new and existing infrastructure	Potential future SRV
New footpath expenditure	
Additional recreational facility infrastructure	

Option 4 pros and cons

Pros	Cons
Providing for arts and theatre and culture (x2)	New projects may not be most suitable for community
Financial management and sustainability	Project delivery capability and accountability
New assets for community	Marian St Theatre costs and not required (x4)
Huge new funding amount (x3)	Lack of user pays
Traffic infrastructure and road safety	Could utilise other sources of funds
	People could default on their ability to pay rates
	Very expensive
	Only marginal improvement from Option 3
	Too expensive / locked into ongoing expenses

Tables were then asked to rank the options, from most to least preferred. Most tables were supportive of a Special Rate Variation increase option.

Overall ranking by table

Table	Most preferred	Second most preferred	Third most preferred	Least preferred
1	29% increase (Option 3)	Equal between 3% increase (Option 1) and 22% increase (Option 2)		N/A
2	3% increase (Option 1)	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)
3	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	3% increase (Option 1)	33% increase (Option 4)
4	3% increase (Option 1)	22% increase (Option 2)	29% increase (Option 3)	33% increase (Option 4)
5	29% increase (Option 3)	22% increase (Option 2)	33% increase (Option 4)	3% increase (Option 1)

Tables were asked to record the reason for their preferences. These are listed below.

Table	Reason for preference ranking
1	Democratic outcome, best return for Council
2	No reason provided
3	Most reasonable outcome
4	Affordability
5	Support for Option 4 based on condition that Marian St Theatre costs not included in option

Council asked participants whether they were aware of the rate increase option engagement activity, before they attended the workshop. Some 74% of participants said they were aware.

Council then asked participants whether they were aware any SRV would be permanent. Of the participants who were aware of the engagement activity, some 50% said they were aware the SRV would be permanent.

Council then asked participants for any other matters it should consider when progressing the project. The following comments were made:

- *Consider a rise between 3% and 22%.*
- *Consult community as which of the proposals are most needed or most favourable.*
- *Prove that you can handle big infrastructure projects and hire more people who can handle them.*
- *Consider the income that will be accrued from developments, rather than increasing rates.*
- *A lot of information for this and hopefully will be balanced and updated in the future.*
- *Why does option 4 only include funding the Marian Street Theatre instead of all cultural facilities for example better funding the Ku-ring-gai Art Centre.*
- *What proportion of residents are likely to use the Marian Street Theatre? Why not get private sources of funding. It is likely to be a facility that is used Sydney wide*
- *Stop thinking that we are all rich just because we live here. We have higher than average mortgage expenses and cost of living pressures, three years of rate increases have hurt us all*
- *All options tabled were about rate increases, there were no other options considered. It would have been valuable to spend time on other options for revenue raising, eg partnering with TAFE for students lessening trades. They spend hours learning skills and building fake walls and fake plumbing. Why couldn't they partner with the local council to do real work experience on these jobs. It's a win win. Students get experience and the council gets labour*
- *Start prosecuting people who illegally cut down protected trees!! If council took a stand and said we will fine you $50k per tree and actually prosecute it will result in a greener Ku-ring-gai and more revenue*
- *Charging rates to private schools*
- *Reconsider the very strict DA rules*

- *Seeking grants for sporting fields from business. For example, I work at (name removed) Insurance and we have a program where we offer grants and this could be something that a company can so sponsor, so keep kids in sport etc.*
- *Surely there are other ways*
- *The speakers tonight were good and I particularly liked the engineer. It was clear he was concerned about requesting a rate hike and that made me empathetic to his cause.*
- *I agree council needs more money. But let's try to get it from those that can afford it and let's try to look at other ways. Please don't assume that everyone in Ku-ring-gai is wealthy. They may have assets but many have been stung with 13 interest rate hikes and rampant inflation. We need a break too*
- *The lack of faith the general public has in government may be an insurmountable obstacle in getting trust that anything promised will be delivered or done efficiently. As such, community feedback should be taken with more than a grain of sand, and whichever option is projected to be most efficient long term should be chosen.*
- *Council should take the hard decisions regarding allocation of budget. It is outstanding that you acknowledge that the poor state of footpaths and storm water systems create potential safety hazards that are put into the backlog. These should be the main priority, before building of new facilities to serve population driven by new apartment dwellers.*
- *Stop wasting money. Consider if assets are needed or should be disposed of or repurposed*
- *Agree the need for additional works but demand is high for value for money and completion on time and budget.*
- *Marian St theatre is no longer feasible affordable or required in community.*
- *Are you cost modelling with a higher population rate base and higher business led growth given business rates are so low compared to average and nearby councils.*
- *Keep up relationships with other community groups that fund community activities and green space eg golf courses that support local communities.*
- *I think if council is serious about community support then i would suggest presenting a clear plan for remediation of current projects as well as measures to ensure good governance that is transparent to the community. An example might be an advisory group/board of experienced professionals potentially from the community.*
- *Give an option between 1 and 2*
- *As long as the council ACTUALLY follow through with what they say they will do.*
- *Perhaps sell off existing council owned buildings.*
- *Have a small sqm so people can sub divide."*
- *Transparency*
- *Option 4 was unpopular because most felt Marian St was not deemed important.*
- *Is there an alternate way to fund the improvements, how can we have a say in the allocation of funding, what are the long term impacts of increased cost of living in the Kuringai area, time value of money… are we going to reap the rewards of our expense*
- *Council should plan its infrastructure maintenance and improvements to align with development over the next decade ie increase demand on infrastructure*
- *The priorities on these options seem skewed. Why are new sporting facilities being considered when roads don't have gutters?*
- *Increase in rate of fixing storm water and footpaths before bringing in new infrastructure (costs of refurbishing existing infrastructure has blown out to unmanageable levels so getting on top of this before building new may assist in the future)*
- *Happy with increases as per options 2 and 3, with provisos on decision-making eg reverting Norman Griffiths oval to natural turf*

- *Where is the business plan for the Marian Street Theatre? What guarantee do we have that council can and will deliver on this project and in budget*
- *Getting developers to contribute appropriately to infrastructure. Big and smaller developers should be contributing and not being treated better than residents. There are sources of revenue other than residents. Council has shown that they are not able to managed large projects successfully.*
- *Does all the modelling include the increase in staffing costs etc. the more jobs the more jobs*
- *Think carefully about the ability to deliver prior to the submission to IPART*
- *This session should have been centred around utility. Naturally people do not want to pay more tax hence why option one was the most chosen at rank 1.*
- *Rates also need reform to account for income and wealth not just land value!*
- *Generate greater confidence in community that council can deliver on new infrastructure projects.*
- *To use those additional fund properly and efficiently*
- *Safety over delivery*
- *Seek a vote from ratepayers on the available options for a greater sample size.*
- *Council should be more efficient in spending a $1bn capital works program"*
- *Required more information and community engagement.*
- *Responsibility, accountability, effectiveness, efficiency, communication*
- *Rates on private schools needs consideration*
- *Finish the Norman Griffith soccer pitch - this project is impacting the community.*
- *More explanation on SRV*

28 August drop-in session at St Ives Centre

On 28 August, around 21 people attended a drop-in session at the St Ives Centre to talk with Council staff about the rate increase options.

Questions asked, and comments made, included:

- *Support the Marian St Theatre*
- *Purpose of existing Special Rate Variations on the rates notice*
- *Concern that existing ratepayers were paying for future growth*
- *Concern about spending on environmental programs*

Attachment C: Key themes from submissions and recruited workshops

Feedback theme	Number of times mentioned
MARIAN STREET THEATRE	
Council should fund the Marian St Theatre, including because of its importance for local arts and creativity, business growth and youth development	327
Marian St Theatre funding should be available in all rate increase options	1
Marian St Theatre should be included in a new high-rise development	3
Marian St Theatre site should be sold, if not financially viable	7
Council engagement material shows a low-rise theatre, however in planning documents a 22m high building is proposed at this site	1
Marian St Theatre not necessary to re-open, including because of cost, allegedly lack of viability and easy access to other nearby alternatives	11
Need for more information about Marian St Theatre, including a business plan	2
Marian St Theatre should be funded by a government grant	1
Marian St Theatre should be self-funding	3
Marian St Theatre construction cost is too high	2
Marian St Theatre will not work as it is not near restaurants and activity	1
Remove funding for new footpaths and instead use this to fund Marian St Theatre	1
Marian St Theatre should be funded outside of Special Rate Variation process, such as by private sources	2
EFFICIENCY AND COST CUTTING	
There is a need for a greater focus on efficiency and cost containment, including a perception that Council does not have a sufficient commitment to efficiency and should only examine a rate increase after an efficiency review	41
Seek to find savings in capital expenditure projects	1
Council should cut services or costs to fund infrastructure, including going ‘back to basics’. Suggested areas for reduced expenditure included events, printing, street signs, town centre beautification, translation and environmental, community development and sustainability programs and senior staff salaries	53
Rate increase not justified due to alleged wastage of funds on councilors Blue Mountains workshop expenditure	17
Rate increase not justified due to alleged wastage of funds on development legal action	10
Don’t spend any increased rates on litigation	1
Rate increase not justified due to Norman Griffiths cost increase	19
Rate increase only justified if Norman Griffiths Oval stays as natural turf	1
Use TAFE students to save costs on infrastructure	1
Council should have a staff freeze	1
Improve the procurement system to save costs	2
Council should create multi-use assets as an efficiency measure	1
OTHER REVENUE SOURCES	
Council should find other revenue sources, apart from rates – such as encouraging more businesses to move into area, improved park, tree and other fine revenue and sponsorship from corporations	12
Council should benefit from selling assets as an alternative to a rate increase	4
Council should benefit from better utilising or managing assets as an alternative to a rate increase	3
Council should be seeking to increase funds from developers, to mitigate any rate increase	7
Income from developer contributions should negate need for a rate increase	11
Council should be getting more rates, or income, from owners of new apartments	4

Feedback theme	Number of times mentioned
Income from rates from new apartments should negate need for a rate increase	5
Increase density and development, including to increase revenue, assist affordability, help families and reduce average age of population	4
Council should allow more dual occupancy development to increase rates revenue as an alternative to a rate increase	2
Council should adopt a user pays principle for more assets, including sporting facilities	3
Amount of rates collected should be linked to number of people living in a property	1
Council should fund infrastructure by raising loans	3
There is a need for Council to lobby for increased NSW Government subsidies to mitigate the need for a rate increase, including to support new development pushed by government and because of cost shifting	8
There is a need for Council to lobby the Australian Government for subsidies, including for the reason that it is allegedly promoting immigration which is driving population growth and infrastructure demand	3
Ratepayers should be provided incentives to pay their rates in advance, to assist Council’s cash flow	1
High land values should be delivering more revenue for Council	1
Make private schools and potentially other exempt entities pay rates	4
Ensure inspections for local road and other infrastructure damage are undertaken before ‘bonds’ are released to builders	1
Encourage relationships with community groups which look after local assets and create local activities	1
RATE INCREASE STRUCTURE	
Rate increase should be temporary rather than permanent	6
There is a need for a rate increase option between 3 and 22%	24
Support incremental or tiered rate increases, including on a trial basis	7
Government should be asked to revalue land to increase rates	1
Rate amount should be linked to income and wealth, not just land value	1
ST IVES INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE	
Not appropriate to add St Ives Indoor Sports Centre to Options 2, 3 or 4, as the centre is perceived to not be of sufficient value or should be funded through centre users	12
St Ives Indoor Sports Centre should be only funded on basis of a ‘user pays’ principle	2
Not appropriate for ratepayers to fund a “NSW Government asset”	1
Need for greater communication and information on St Ives Indoor Sports Centre	3
Council should not have embarked on St Ives Indoor Sports Centre without an approved funding source and ratepayer consultation	2
Rates should be reduced once St Ives Indoor Sports Centre loan is repaid	2
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	
Council has sufficient cash reserves, now and in the future, to fund necessary infrastructure	2
Needs to be greater transparency as to how infrastructure backlog was allowed to accumulate	6
Council has recently had surpluses and/or high cash liquidity ratios, negating the need for a rate increase	2
Council should be benchmarked against other councils	1
Council needs to conduct a full financial review before, or as part of, proposing rate increases	10
There is a need for greater detail, engagement and information as to how revenue has and will be spent, including on infrastructure	22
Council needs to plan for changing demographics and community needs	2
COST OF LIVING IMPACTS	
Affordability / cost of living impacts of rate increase	51
The rate increases will particularly impact pensioners	4

Feedback theme	Number of times mentioned
The rate increases will particularly impact retirees / people on fixed incomes	7
The rate increases will particularly impact younger families	6
Land rezoning is already forcing up rates	2
Rate increases will reduce desirability of Ku-ring-gai as a place to do business	1
Rate increase will cause more illegal dumping by financially stressed people	1
Need for rates hardship tribunal	1
Council's proposed increases are far higher than what is proposed by other councils, and therefore is not justified	1
Needs to be a review of ratepayer concessions and their fairness alongside the rate increase	2
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	
Concern that Council does not have a sufficiently robust project management or delivery capacity to provide the additional infrastructure	15
Norman Griffiths Oval cost increase raises concerns Council is not capable of undertaking increased infrastructure	9
Rate increase not justified while Council is considering North Turramurra Recreation Area facility	2
Rate increase not justified due to alleged slow pace of Ku-ring-gai aquatic centre upgrade	3
INFRASTRUCTURE SELECTION	
Rate increase should be prioritised to "essential infrastructure", including drainage, footpaths and maintenance	9
Rate increase should be focussed on "neglected areas"	1
Phasing of infrastructure improvements need to be better known, with more transparency around strategic infrastructure planning	3
New buildings should be modest in scale	1
Too much of a focus on new footpaths, with reasons cited including concrete environmental impact, not used because people drive instead or walk on grass, and tree damage	8
Rate increases are needed for better infrastructure and property values	12
Footpaths needed for a safe environment	2
Over-spending on parks has led to under-investment in footpaths and drains	1
Road renewal, including fixing up potholes, should be top priority	5
Other infrastructure upgrades not needed	1
Traffic calming only needed if residents are pushing for it	2
Prioritise funding for existing infrastructure	1
Need for greater transparency on infrastructure outcomes in key asset classes, including the "other infrastructure" category	2
Stormwater needed in Turramurra	1
Happy with infrastructure, therefore rate increase not required	1
Need to stop stormwater impacts on private properties	1
Infrastructure should only be renewed when at the end of its life	1
Infrastructure proposed will not benefit me therefore does not support increase	1
Support new cultural facilities, such as Ku-ring-gai Art Centre upgrade, being funded by rate increase	2
Need for more traffic facilities and pedestrian bridge at Lindfield because of development	1
Greater increase to recycling facilities are needed	1
By adding new infrastructure, Council is creating a maintenance and depreciation burden for future generations	1
CONSULTATION PROCESS	
Survey to unfairly skewed to get a certain result	9
Rate increase brochure was a waste of money	2
Council has failed to adequately consider alternatives to a rate rise	1
Council has not made a convincing case for a rate increase	1

Feedback theme	Number of times mentioned
Insufficient time for questions at in-person forum	1
There should have been more in-person events	1
Allow people to decide on where rates should go rather than packaging into fixed options	1
Need a greater sample size before making a decision on the rate increase options	1
OTHER	
Council should provide more free services in return for a rate increase, such as free access to tennis courts	1
Council needs a sovereign wealth fund	1
Assumed 2026/27 rate peg of 3% doesn't make sense against 6.1% rate peg increase this year	1
Rate increase engagement must be transparent	1
Council should use rate increase to 'open up' more greenspace	1
Council should use rate increase for greater biodiversity protection	1
Rate increase needed for area's lifestyle, amenity and new residents	1
Rate increase should be considered as part of examination of role of all tiers of government, including in relation to housing affordability and intergenerational equity	1
IPART rate pegging process is flawed	1
Pensioner rebate should be removed / is not justified	2