



Land value fiasco

REBECCA WOOLLEY

FIGURES showing land values in some Manly streets have jumped by 108 per cent in three years are "absolute nonsense", according to Mayor Peter Macdonald.

The mayor won Manly Council support last week to write to NSW Valuer General Philip Western to point out "bizarre anomalies" in his figures.

The sharp increases have disgruntled numerous residents including George Siter, of Seaforth, whose complaints to Mr Weston prompted a review of land values in that suburb.

Weekend media reports said NSW Treasurer Michael Costa was planning to announce an overhaul of the land tax system in his first state Budget in June.

This could include possible tax cuts, a more transparent appeals process while the Valuer General would be given more time to assess property values, according to the reports.

A council report tabled last week showed land values in some Manly streets had increased by only 2 per cent between mid-2002 and last year, while others had skyrocketed by 108 per cent.

Vastly different land values were also detected between properties in the same street while the total valuation for the land in the municipality had increased by an average of 49 per cent, it added.

The rises could impact on residents' wallets, according to the report which predicted council rates would rise for households where land values had jumped by more than 49 per cent.

"Notable increases were Rolfe St (89 per cent), Smith St (88 per cent), Denison St (108 per cent), Arthur St (77 per cent), Alan Ave (4 per cent) and Wentworth St (10 per cent)," it said.

Meanwhile, land values in Barrabooka St, Clontarf, had increased by just 2 per cent since July 2002.

Seaforth and Clontarf recorded the lowest average increase of 33 and 31 per cent while the highest was 64 per cent at Fairlight.

The report said properties in line with the average would pay similar rates to the current levy, while those where values had increased by less than 49 per cent would have a reduction.

During last week's meeting Cr Macdonald said: "I think we should resolve that the valuations provided to us by the Valuer General are an absolute nonsense.

"Some people as a result of this will have their rates significantly increased and others will have them significantly reduced."

He said the figures were a "shining example" of getting it wrong.

"We have to defend our ratepayers and say we do not believe it," Cr Macdonald said.

“I think we should resolve that the valuations provided to us by the Valuer-General are an absolute nonsense”



— Manly Mayor
PETER MACDONALD



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Land values have reportedly increased by 64 per cent in Fairlight since July, 2002