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HORNSBY COUNCIL LABELLED 'DESPERATE AND DATELESS' IN HOSTILE TAKEOVER BID

Ryde Council is crying foul over Hornsby Shire Council's hostile resolution last night to "take over" Macquarie Park, Eastwood and Marsfield within the City of Ryde LGA boundary in their bid to become 'Fit for the Future'.

Ryde Mayor, Cllr Bill Pickering said he was shocked at the brazen act by a 'desperate and dateless' Council. He said it was akin to the actions of a 'spoilt brat with delusions of grandeur with whom no one else wants to deal with'.

"It is not only counter-productive it totally contradicts the Office of Local Government's *Fit for the Future* guidelines in respect of a hostile takeover."

IPART has advised all Councils that if any hostile proposals are made and it is clear that the Councils affected had not agreed or discussed the matter, then that proposal would not be considered and automatically rejected.

"Let me put it on record that Hornsby has had no discussion with the City of Ryde about these proposed boundary adjustments.

"We do not need to resort to desperate tactics at the eleventh hour. Ryde, Lane Cove and Hunters Hill Councils have a superior option which enjoys the support of our communities. It begs the question whether Hornsby Council has asked its community if they support a hostile takeover of the northern suburbs of Ryde.

"This aggressive tactic by Hornsby Council has been tried before and rejected by a number of other Councils and Hornsby has been left "isolated, desperate and dateless" in its bid to find merger partners.

Cllr Pickering also pointed out that in Hornsby Council's *Fit for the Future* submission they state that they are a 'role model' Council. "If this is the case, then I hope other councils do not follow Hornsby's underhanded manoeuvre to portray themselves as being 'progressive'."

Macquarie Park is indeed the jewel in the crown and under the City of Ryde's leadership has grown rapidly as an employment, high-tech, pharmaceuticals and telecommunications hub. It contributes \$9.1 billion to the State's coffers and employs in excess of 90,000 workers.

Recently Ministers Anthony Roberts and Victor Dominello publicly acknowledged the City of Ryde's track record in developing Macquarie Park to be the State's second largest business precinct. They also stated that the City of Ryde should continue to control Macquarie Park's future.

The Mayor concluded: "It is ironic that everyone wants a piece of Ryde thanks to its outstanding success, strong leadership and desirable location.

“Hornsby cannot even manage the operation of a local swimming pool, so how do they think they could handle a billion-dollar business park. They’re dreaming!

“Ryde Council has established a strong partnership over many years with both businesses and residents and we will not surrender any part of our City without a fight.”

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