



# Randwick City Council

Amalgamation Research  
Prepared by: Micromex Research  
Date: October 2013





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## Background

The State Government has instigated a process of review into Local Government. The Independent Local Government Review Panel has been created to analyse the councils in NSW, to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and to recommend a path for change. One of the points raised by the Review Panel is the possible need for boundary changes, consolidations, or in simple terms 'amalgamations'.

Earlier in the year, a community survey indicated that Randwick residents soundly rejected the ILGRP's Global City amalgamation option.

Randwick City Council has undertaken a community survey in order to measure the Randwick community's attitude towards amalgamation when a more localised solution is provided.

## Interviewing

A random telephone survey of 600 residents was conducted between 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

Interviewing was conducted in accordance with IQCA (Interviewer Quality Control Australia) Standards and the Market Research Society Code of Professional Conduct. Where applicable, the issues in each question were systematically rearranged for each respondent.

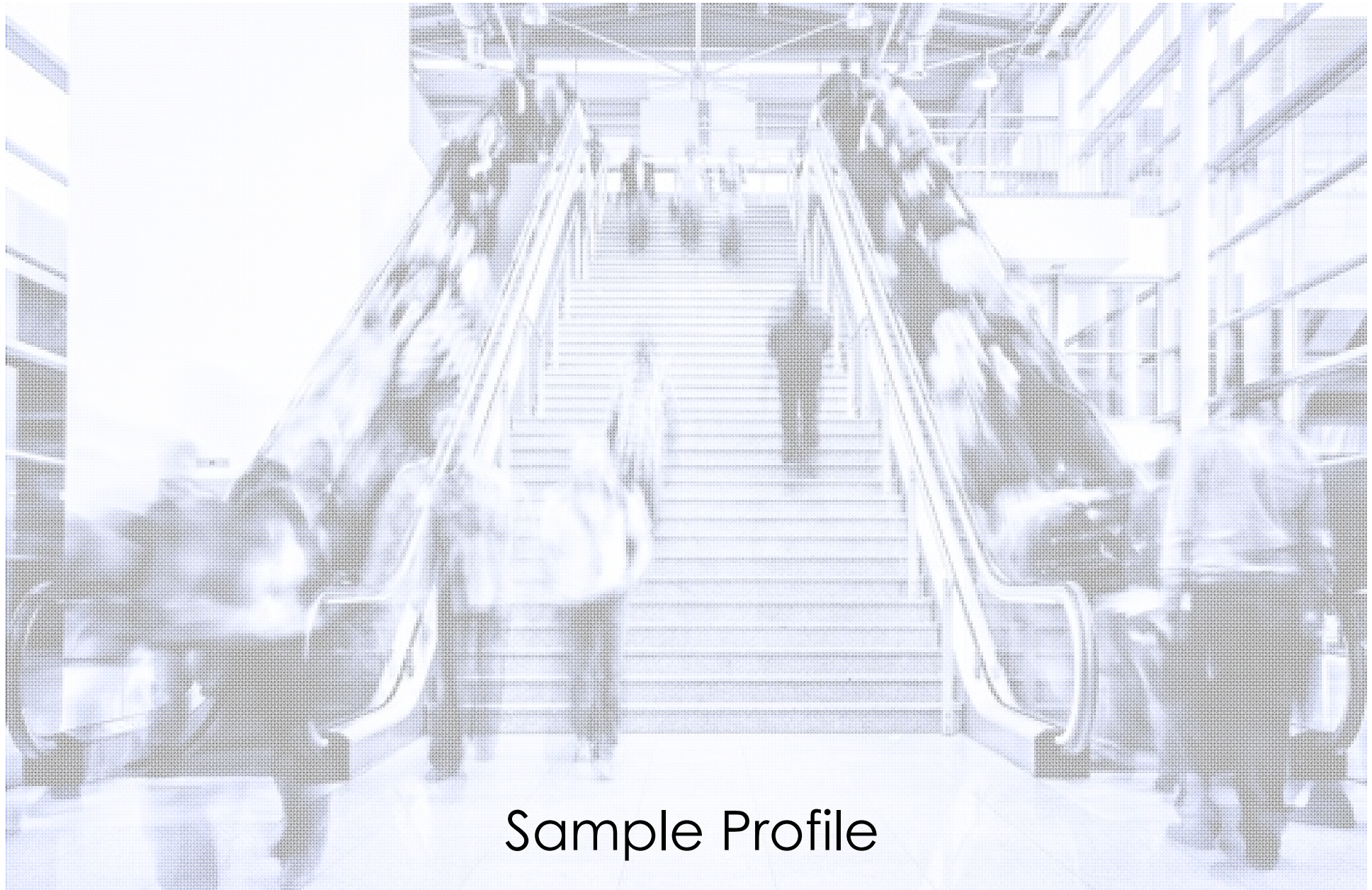
## Sampling error

A sample size of 600 provides a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.0% at 95% confidence.

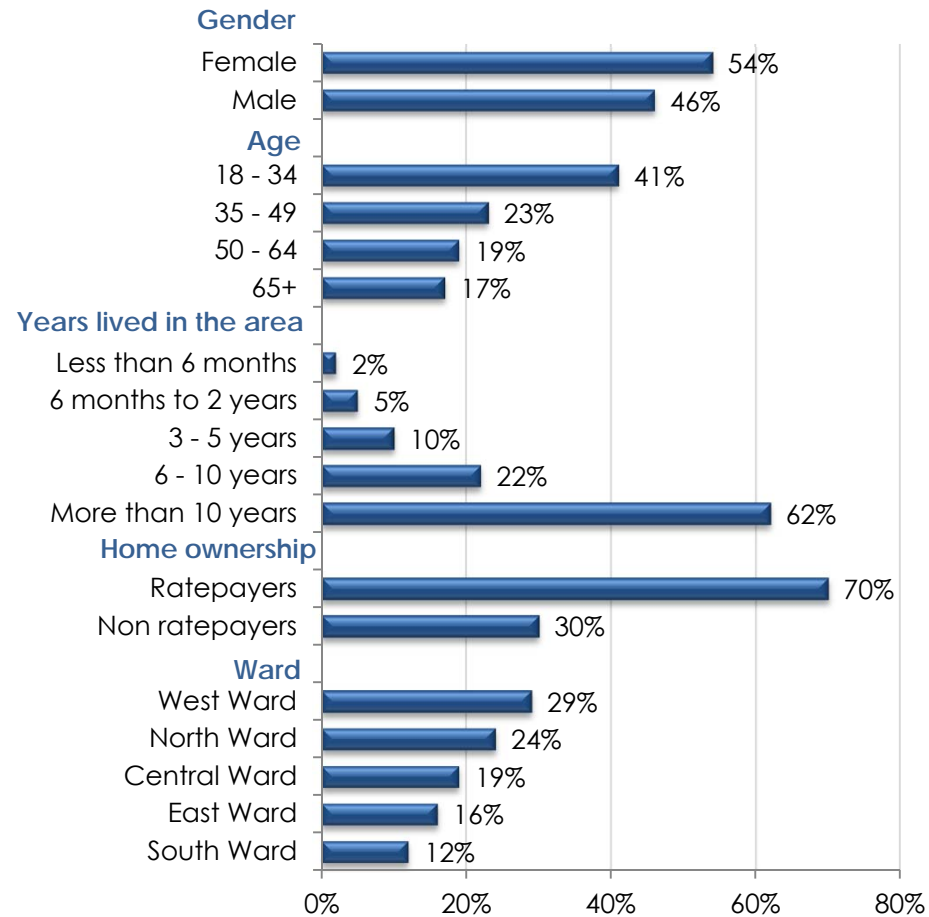
## Data analysis

The data within this report was analysed using SPSS V15.

**Errors:** Data in this publication is subject to sampling variability because it is based on information relating to a sample of residents rather than the total number. This difference (sampling error) may occur due to imperfections in reporting and errors made in processing the data. This may occur in any enumeration, whether it is a full count or sample. Efforts have been made to reduce the non-sampling error by careful design of the questionnaire and detailed checking of completed questionnaires.



# Sample Profile



Base: n=600

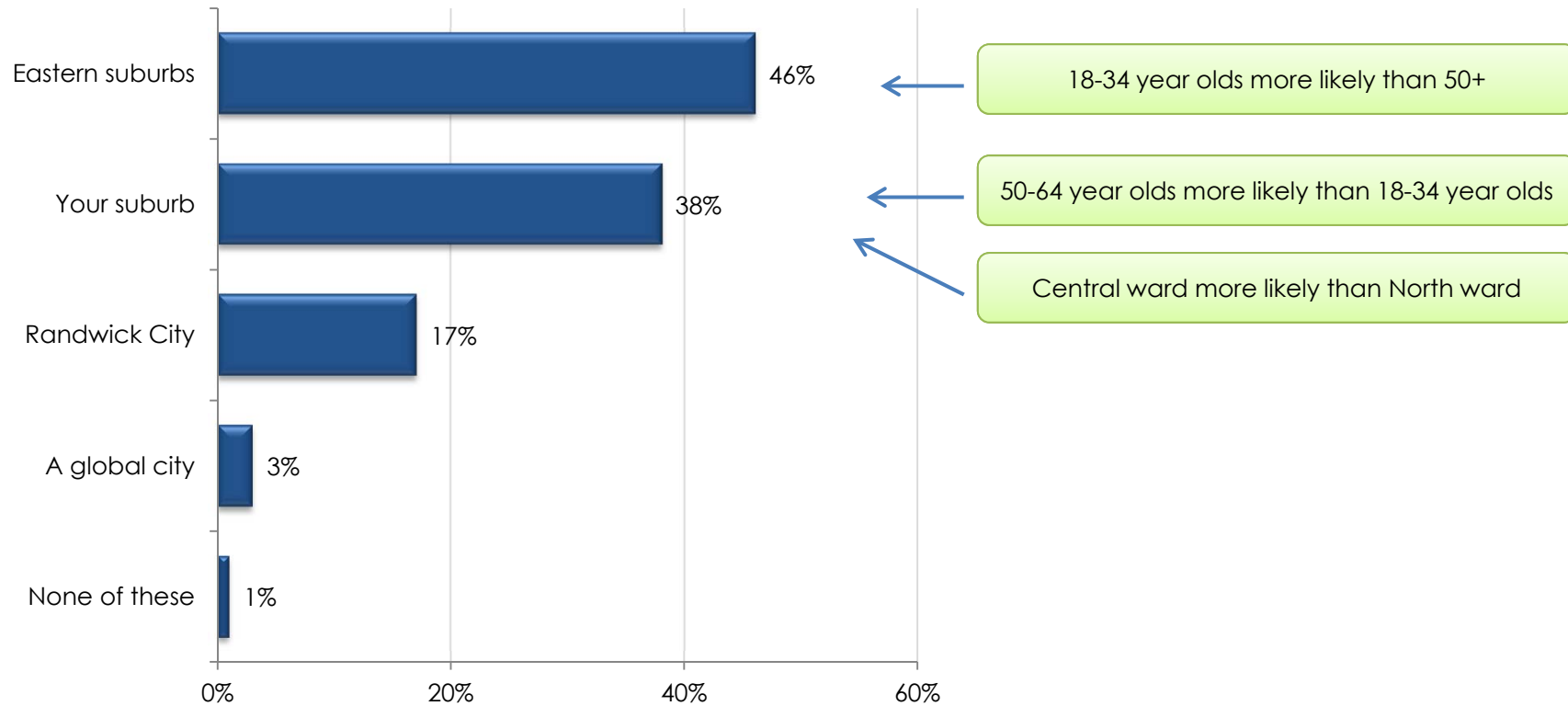
The sample was weighted to reflect the 2011 ABS Statistics



## Current Brand Image

# 46% Associate Themselves With Being Residents Of The Eastern Suburbs

Q. Which of the following, if any, do you most associate with where you live?



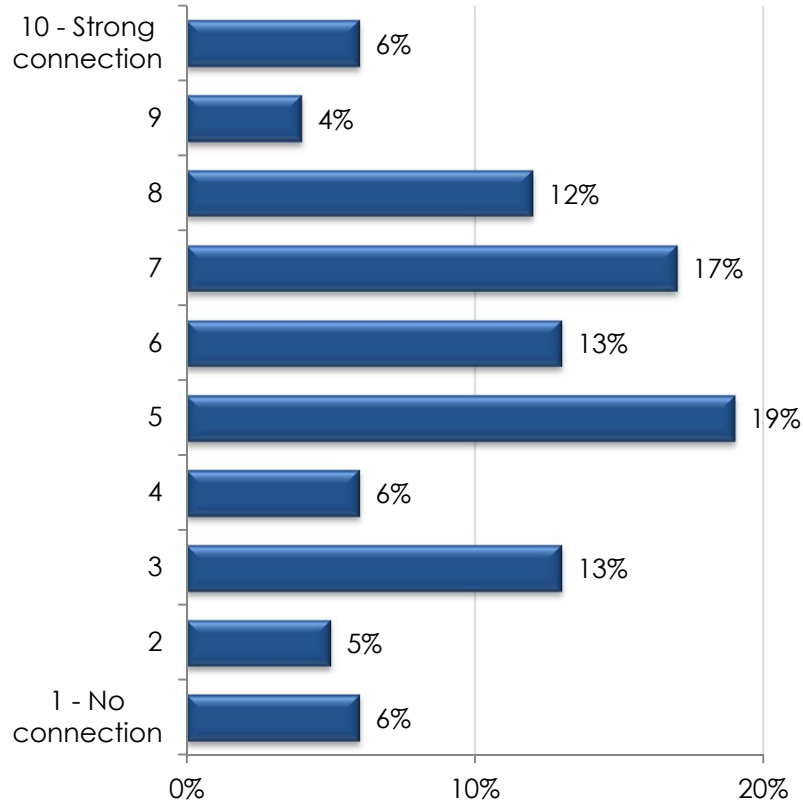
Base: n=600

The Eastern Suburbs as a region/place resonated with residents



# 52% Of Residents Gave A Connection Score Of 6+

Q. How would you rate your connection with the Randwick Local Government Area?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	18 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+	Overall
	5.53	5.66	5.37	5.64	5.64	6.07	5.60
Mean ratings	West Ward	North Ward	South Ward	Central Ward	East Ward	Own	Rent
	5.42	5.76	5.47	5.63	5.76	5.70	5.38

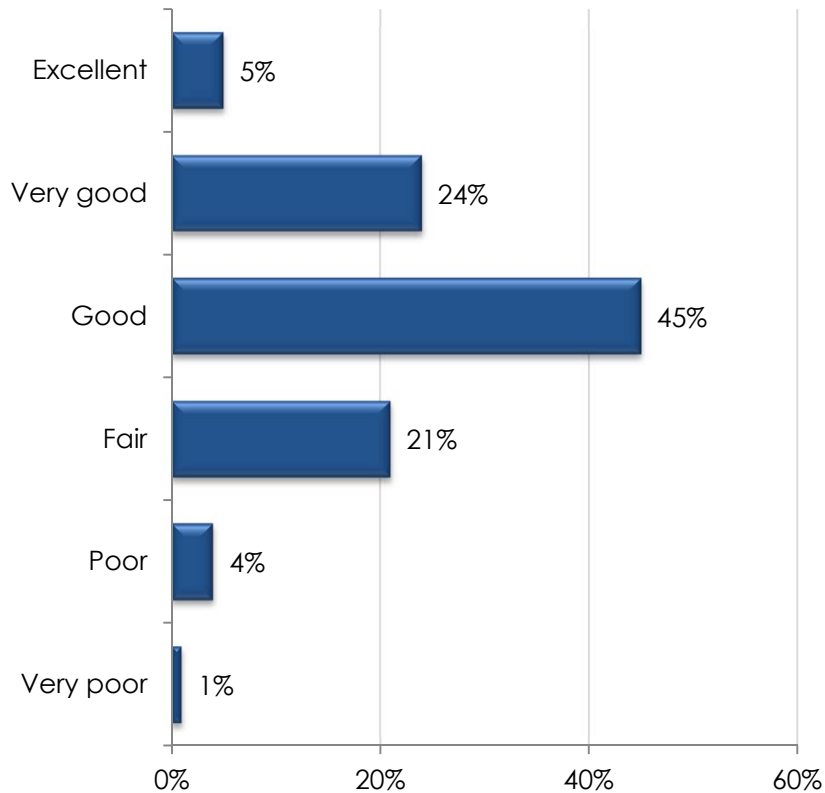
Scale: 1 = no connection, 10 = strong connection  
= significantly higher/lower level compared to Overall

Base: n=600

Home owners/buyers express higher levels of connection

# The Randwick City Council Image Score Is Significantly Higher Than LGA Benchmarks

Q. Overall, how would you rate Randwick Council's image within the local community?



Base: n=600

	Randwick City Council	Randwick City Council July	LGA Benchmarks	
			Metro	Overall
Mean ratings	4.01 ▲	4.00 ▲	3.83	3.55

= significantly higher/lower level compared to the LGA Benchmarks

Mean ratings	Male	Female	18 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+	Overall
	3.96	4.04	4.11	3.94	3.77 ▼	4.13	4.01
	West Ward	North Ward	South Ward	Central Ward	East Ward	Own	Rent
3.88	3.97	4.01	4.03	4.24 ▲	4.01	3.98	

Scale: 1 = very poor, 6 = excellent  
= significantly higher/lower level compared to Overall

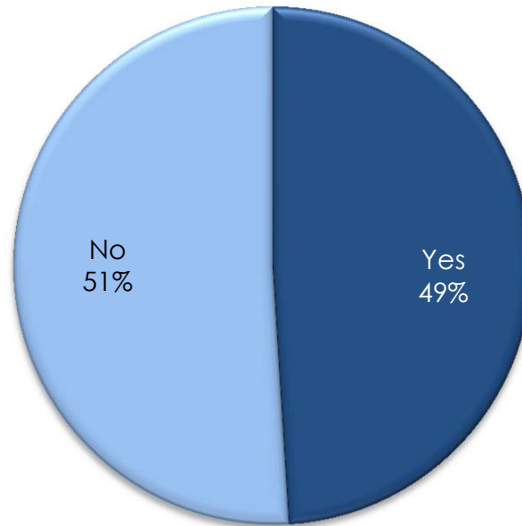
Strongest result is in the East Ward



# There Was A Moderately High Level Of Claimed Community Awareness Of The State Government's Review

Q. Are you aware that the State Government is reviewing the Local Government system?

A lower level of awareness was cited by 18-34 years than by those aged 50+



Base: n=600

With 50/50 outcomes it is important to note that the results could also be chance driven

# Amalgamation Concept Statement

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The NSW State Government appointed an Independent Local Government Review Panel last year to investigate options for a more efficient and effective system of local government.

One of the Panel's recommendations is to create a global city council by amalgamating Randwick Council with City of Sydney, Woollahra, Waverley, Botany Bay, Marrickville and Leichhardt councils.

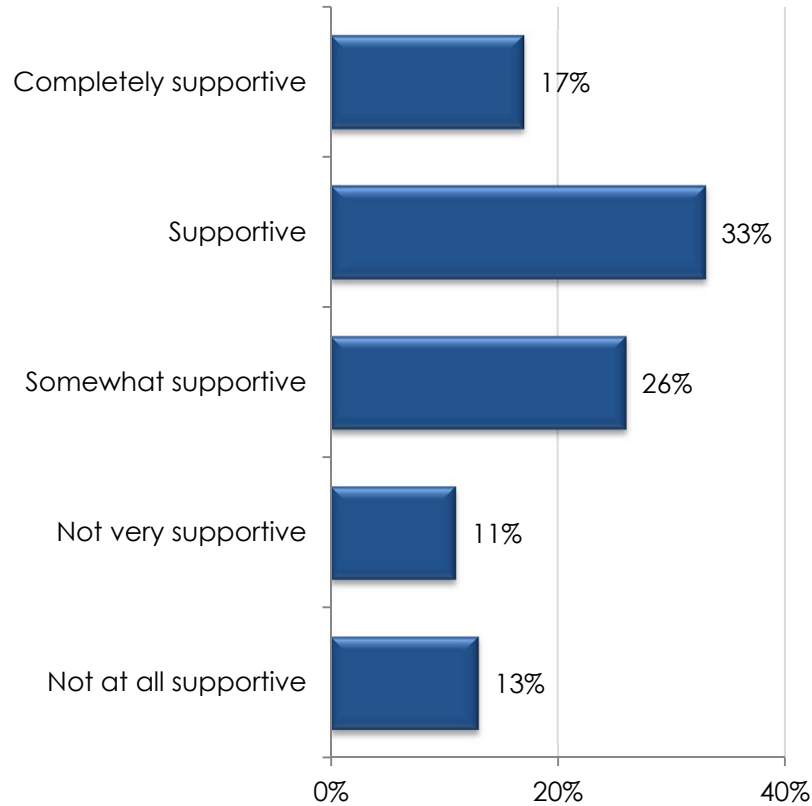
The Council believes the community and Council should determine its own future, and as such does not agree with forced amalgamations. But if there was to be a voluntary amalgamation, Council's preference is for the creation of an eastern suburbs council with Randwick, Woollahra, Waverley and the Port Botany complex.

A report commissioned by Council found that this eastern suburbs council could produce substantial cost efficiencies of \$500 million over 10 years without raising rates, increasing fees or reducing services.

The report also factored in maintaining the current level of Councillor representation, paying off the other councils' debts and bringing all roads, footpaths and buildings up to standard.

# 76% Of Residents Are Somewhat Supportive – Very Supportive Of The Eastern Suburbs Council Proposal

Q. How supportive would you be of creating a new eastern suburbs council combining Randwick, Woollahra, Waverly and the Port Botany complex?



Mean ratings	Male	Female	18 - 34	35 - 49	50 - 64	65+	Overall
	3.42	3.21	3.28	3.34	3.36	3.27	3.31
Mean ratings	West Ward	North Ward	South Ward	Central Ward	East Ward	Own	Rent
	3.33	3.31	3.81▲	3.13	3.10	3.24	3.45

Scale: 1 = not at all supportive, 5 = completely supportive

▲ ▼ = significantly higher/lower level of support by group

Base: n=600

Those in the South Ward expressed the highest levels of support







## Not Very To Not At All Supportive (24%) Key Themes

- Q How supportive would you be of creating a new eastern suburbs council combining Randwick, Woollahra, Waverly and the Port Botany complex?  
Q Why do you say that?



“All the suburbs have different needs and smaller suburbs would be overlooked”

“Combining councils will not solve any problems and might lead to a decrease in services”

“Council should remain as a single entity to maintain current service levels in the community”

“Diversity of all the suburbs is so different and I don't think they would mix well”

“Each area has its own specific needs that can be addressed by a local council”

“Everything is currently going smoothly and don't believe we will benefit from an amalgamation”

“Residents and ratepayers would get less of a say in local government issues”

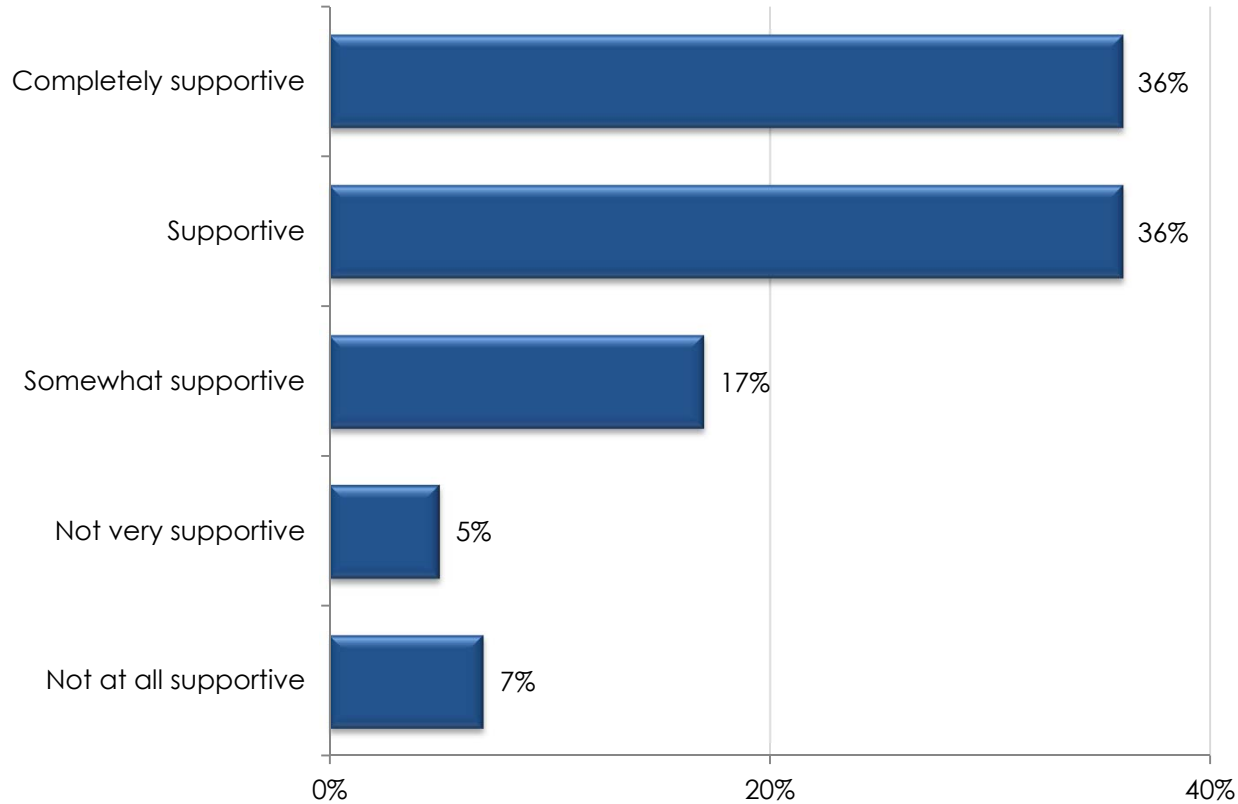
“Single councils are controlled better because there are fewer people trying to make decisions”

“The amalgamated council would be too large to effectively deal with individual needs of residents”

Those who are not supportive of the amalgamations raised a range of concerns, with the common themes being around the importance of local solutions and a loss of the area's unique identity

# 88% Of Residents Supported The Eastern Suburbs Proposal If It Resulted In Cheaper Rates And Maintained Service Levels

Q. How supportive would you be of the eastern suburbs council proposal if it resulted in cheaper rates and maintained service levels?

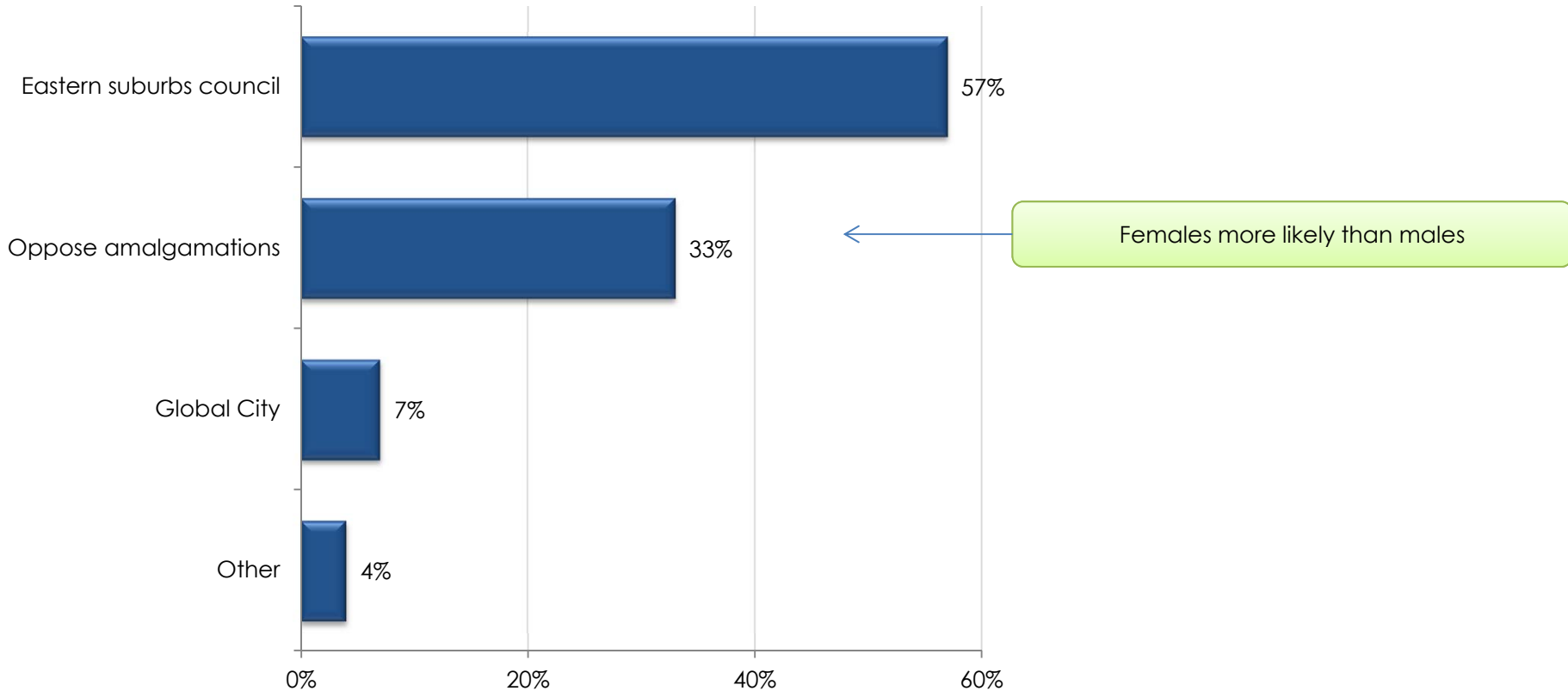


Base: n=600

The financial incentive significantly strengthened community support for this option

# When Pressed, 57% Preferred The Eastern Suburbs Council Option

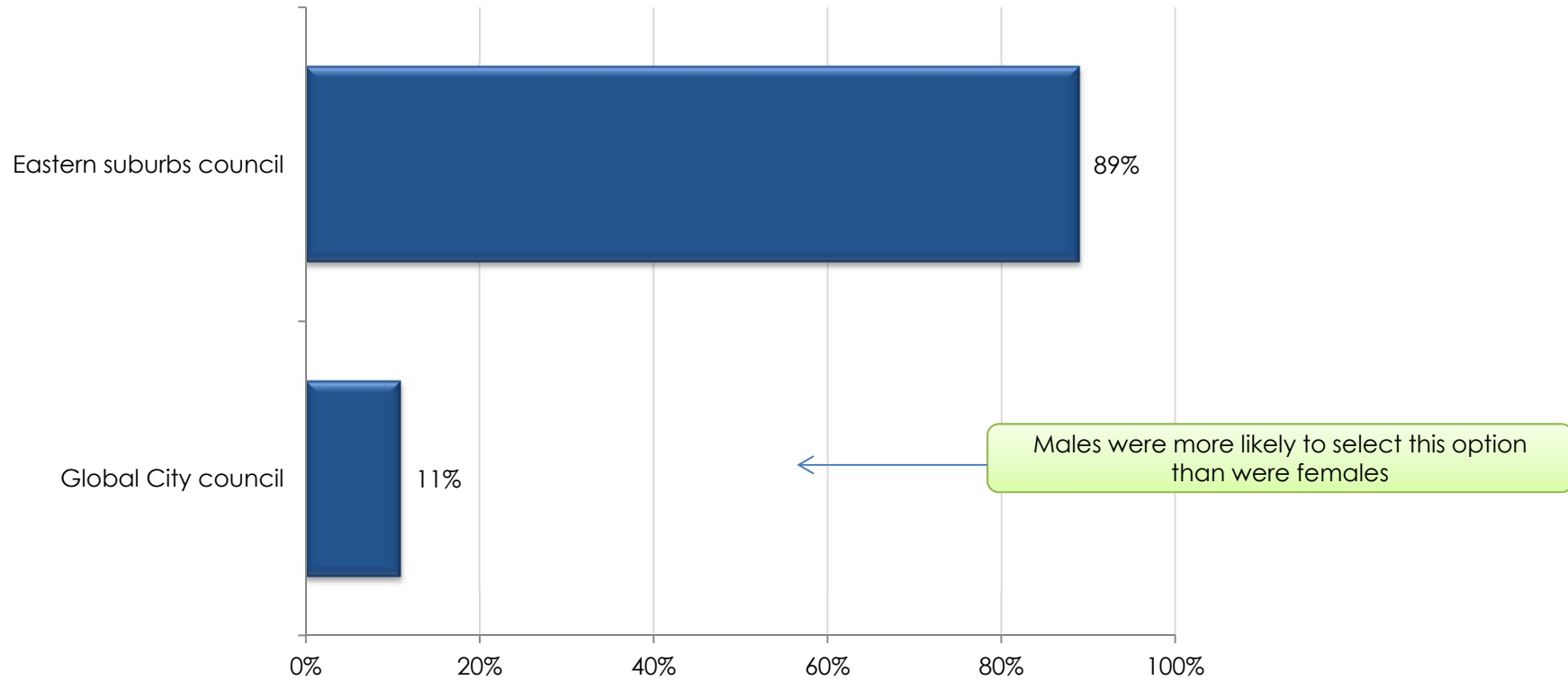
Q. As we indicated earlier, the Independent Local Government Review Panel has recommended an option for Randwick Council to become part of a super global city council. Based on what we outlined which of the following options would be your preference?



1/3 of residents still oppose amalgamation

# There Is No Community Support For The ILGRP Suggested Option

Q. If the government decides amalgamations must proceed, which amalgamation option would be your preference?



Base: n=600

If amalgamations were forced, residents would prefer the emergence of an Eastern Suburbs council



### **Randwick City Council's image remains strong**

- *The vast majority of residents indicated that their perceptions of Randwick City Council were 'good – excellent'*

### **Three quarters of residents were at least somewhat supportive of the Eastern Suburbs council option**

- *This support significantly increases when framed with the indication that the proposed amalgamation would result in cheaper residential rates*

### **When pressed on the issue of amalgamation, 57% indicated they preferred the Eastern Suburbs option, but 33% of residents still oppose amalgamation outright**

- *There is no community support for the ILGRP's 'Global City' solution*

# micromex research

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