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Sent: Thursday, 21 February 2019 4:40 PM

To: Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Port Stephens Council

21st February 2019

Local Government Team

IPART

PO Box K35

Haymarket Post Shop

NSW 1240

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re Submission opposing the special rate variation being sought by

Port Stephens Council.

Last November, unaware of required procedures, I forwarded a letter of objection to you only to receive a response informing that submissions will be received after 11 February, 2019.

I have lived in and been a ratepayer of Port Stephens since 1979.

Council's proposal for a rate increase of 7.5% for each of the following 7 years is far too much.

I'm not aware of any residential ratepayer in support of that level of increase. I do believe that support can be found with various businesses in the town centres, as most of the increased income will be directed to revitalising the major town centres, particularly those in tourist areas.


Council claims there are “some” in the community against the increase. I would suggest, “many,” as no doubt you would be aware from monitoring local media and public reaction. Council also states there is strong support for improving infrastructure and this is a true of all communities; nationwide.

My main concern is that whatever is approved to increase the annual rate revenue becomes the minimum rate revenue for the following year. An approval to automatically increase that base rate for seven years will create millions of extra dollars and will form the rate base for each year thereafter. It doesn't stop after 7 years. It continues to multiply. A guaranteed flow of excessive funds will lead to poor planning and wasteful expenditure.

With the “spin” and process adopted by Council I see an increase as inevitable. I would hope that those responsible for granting approval recognise the increased revenue that will flow forever thereafter and would suggest that any increase be restricted to 2 or 3 years, causing Council to be fiscal and focus on needs and not wants. After which, the position can be reviewed.

Yours sincerely,

James Newbery


Raymond Terrace NSW 2324