

*Our Reference: PJW 1862-3#308*

Michael Seery  
IPART  
PO BOX Q290  
QVB POST OFFICE NSW 1230

28 November 2014

Dear Michael,

**WOLLONDILLY COUNCIL'S INTENTION TO APPLY FOR A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION UNDER SECTION 508A**

At its meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014, Wollondilly Council considered a report in relation to a Proposed Special Rate Variation (see copy attached).

Council resolved to write to IPART to give notice of its intention to apply for a Special Rate Variation.

Key information regarding Council's Proposed SRV:

1. Applicable from 1 July 2015
2. A permanent increase in the rating base
3. The SRV options being considered are:
  - Four x 8.5% annual increases, including rate pegging, or
  - Four x 10.8% annual increases, including rate pegging

Council will further consider the matter in February 2015 and will make a final decision on whether it wishes to apply for an SRV, and if so, which SRV option it wishes to pursue.

For your information Council has undertaken a comprehensive community engagement and awareness process regarding the proposed SRV. The Council report and its attachments provide a summary of this process.

Council's contact: Marcello Chiodo  
Acting Deputy General Manager  
[marcello.chiodo@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](mailto:marcello.chiodo@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au)  
4677 1125

Yours faithfully



Luke Johnson  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

GO4

**Proposed Special Rate Variation - Community Engagement Report**

263555KCHI

TRIM 1862-3

**REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- At its September 2014 meeting Council considered a report which advised that a formal Community Engagement process had commenced regarding three Special Rate Variation options
- This report provides a summary of the outcomes of the community engagement process and recommends that Council give notice to IPART of its intention to apply for a Special Rate Variation.

**BACKGROUND**

The Wollondilly Delivery Program 2013/14 – 2016/17 and Operational Plan 2014/15 were adopted by Council in June 2014. The adoption of these Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) documents included approval for Council to start a “conversation” with our community for a proposed Special Rate Variation. (The Delivery Program & Operational Plan 2014/15 under the heading “Addressing your Future Needs”, advised the community of the need for engagement around 3 rate options to address the projected financial shortfall over the next ten years).

At its September 2014 meeting Council considered a report which advised that a formal Community Engagement process had commenced regarding three Special Rate Variation options. At that meeting Council resolved the following:

1. *That Council supports the continued conversation with the community for the need for a special rate variation.*
2. *That a further report come to the 13 October 2014 Council meeting on the progress to date.*
3. *That a further report come to the 17 November 2014 Council meeting outlining community feedback through the revised Integrated Planning and Reporting documents.*
4. *That Council note the NSW Government’s “Fit for the Future” reform package and the need to submit a proposal on how Council intends to become “Fit for the Future” by 30 June 2014.*

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

At its October 2014 meeting Council considered a progress report on the Community Engagement regarding the Special Rate Variation options. At that meeting Council resolved the following:

1. *That Council supports the continued engagement with the community regarding the need for a Special Rate Variation.*
2. *That the outcomes of community engagement regarding Special Rate Variation options will be reported to the November 2014 Council meeting.*

**SPECIAL RATE VARIATION (SRV) OPTIONS**

Against the context of an **estimated \$80 million shortfall over the next 10 years**, Council's community engagement has discussed three SRV options.

**OPTION 1 – “DETERIORATE” - No SRV PROPOSED**

Under this option rates would increase only by the annual rate peg amount. The rate peg percentage for 2013/14 was 3.4% and for 2014/15 it is 2.3%. The rate peg percentage for 2015/16 is expected to be announced at the end of the first quarter of 2015.

This option would leave us with an \$80 million shortfall over 10 years, so it would have the following impacts:

- Our infrastructure would deteriorate further as we would continue to underfund maintenance expenditure. This means we will see worsening roads and continuing deterioration of facilities such as playgrounds and community buildings.
- Council would have virtually no capacity for new capital works (apart from developer contributions and grants). This means Council will have difficulty funding new infrastructure such as kerb and gutter, footpaths, cycleways, open space improvements and new community facilities.
- Council would need to consider a significant reduction in a wide range of Council services in order to address the funding shortfall issues. The nature and number of services delivered by Council, or the levels of service, would need to be reduced.

**OPTION 2 – “STABILISE” - SRV 8.5% PER ANNUM OVER 4 YEARS**

Under this option rates would increase by a total of 8.5% per annum (this includes the annual rate peg percentage) over a fixed four year period (2015/16 to 2018/19).

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

At the end of the four year period the SRV increase will be built into the rate base (in other words rates would be maintained at this new level with just the annual rate peg increases).

This option would generate an additional \$54.5m over the ten year period, so it would have the following impacts / enable the following:

- Council would be able to stabilise the current deteriorating condition of our infrastructure as we would be able to fund our maintenance expenditure. This means the current condition of our roads, facilities and other infrastructure will be gradually improved through essential maintenance.
- Council will have some additional funds (in addition to developer contributions and grants) available to build new infrastructure such as kerb and gutter, footpaths, cycleways, open space improvements and new community facilities.
- Council could maintain its current range of services.

**OPTION 3 – “IMPROVE” - SRV 10.8% PER ANNUM OVER 4 YEARS**

Under this option rates would increase by a total of 10.8% per annum (this includes the annual rate peg percentage) over a fixed four year period (2015/16 to 2018/19).

At the end of the four year period the SRV increase will be built into the rate base (in other words rates would be maintained at this new level with just the annual rate peg increases).

This option would generate the required \$80m over the ten year period, so it would enable the following:

- Council would be able to deliver better roads, facilities and other infrastructure sooner as we would increase and bring forward much needed maintenance expenditure. We would also fully implement a preventative maintenance regime to reduce future costs to the community.
- Council will have more funds available to build new infrastructure such as kerb and gutter, footpaths, cycleways, open space improvements and new community facilities as we would have increased capacity to undertake new capital works.
- Council would be able to deliver a wide range of services.

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**

Council's SRV community engagement strategy has aimed to ensure there is a high level of community awareness regarding the SRV options and therefore utilised a wide range of engagement methods in order to maximise the "reach".

The formal Community Engagement period regarding the three SRV options commenced on 15 September and concluded on the 31 October 2014. The community engagement activities involved:

- Information dissemination at Picton, Bargo & Tahmoor Train Stations
- 13 x Information stalls held across the Shire utilising the Dilly Wanderer van
- 3 x evening community meetings held at Warragamba, Tahmoor and Appin
- 1 x evening information and drop-in session held at Warragamba
- 4 x drop-in Q&A sessions held at Picton Shire Hall
- Special Rate Variation Newsletter Mail Out to all ratepayers (see Attachment 1)
- 3 x Information dissemination at weekend community events; including Tahmoor Uniting Church Community Garden Family Day, Bargo Public School Fete and Warragamba Dam Fest
- Emails sent to Council committee members, Council community directory members and Council business directory members regarding the Special Rate Variation
- 2 x radio interviews on Macarthur Community Radio and ABC Illawarra Radio
- 2 x newspaper advertisements featured in the Macarthur Chronicle, Wollondilly Advertiser and District Reporter
- 2 x articles in the Bush Telegraph featured in the Macarthur Chronicle, Wollondilly Advertiser and District Reporter
- 4 x stories in the Mayors column featured in the Macarthur Chronicle, Wollondilly Advertiser and District Reporter
- 8 x media releases
- Information dissemination to businesses in Warragamba, Silverdale, Tahmoor, Appin, Douglas Park, Thirlmere and Picton
- Information dissemination at Tahmoor Shopping Centre and Picton Mall
- Promotional material at Council facilities including the libraries, customer services, tourist information centre and children services
- Facebook and Twitter posts
- 400 residents completed a Special Rate Variation Telephone Survey conducted by an independent research company.

Governance

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES**

At the time of writing this report we have received 72 submissions regarding the Special Rate Variation proposal.

Submission Method	Number of Submissions
Mail	9
Email	27
Phone/In Person	6
Web	30

A telephone survey was also conducted by an independent research company of 400 residents in Wollondilly.

(At the time of writing this report the community engagement period had not formally closed. Therefore a further addendum report summarising the community engagement process and outcomes will be completed and made available as a Late Report in the week commencing 3 November 2014).

**RELEVANCE TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTCOMES**

Council’s ability to deliver its strategic objectives for our community, as expressed in the Community Strategic Plan, is inextricably linked to our resource capacity. Without an SRV Council will face serious challenges ahead with deteriorating infrastructure and the need to reduce services.

**POLICIES & LEGISLATION**

The process for engaging with our community regarding the need for an SRV, and the matters being considered by Council are in accordance with guidelines published by IPART.

The guidelines also require that Councils intending to submit an application for an SRV must notify IPART of their intention to do so by 12 December 2014. Making this notification does not however commit Council to any specific SRV option. Whether Council does in fact proceed to apply for an SRV is a matter for Council to resolve in February 2015.

The “revised” Wollondilly Delivery Program/Operational Plan and “draft” Resourcing Strategy will be prepared in accordance with:

- Chapter 13 (Part Two) of the Local Government Act 1993
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Guidelines
- Integrated Planning and Reporting Manual
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005.

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**FIT FOR THE FUTURE**

On 10 September 2014, the NSW Government formally announced their response to the Independent Local Government Review Panel and Local Government Acts Taskforce recommendations.

The NSW Government wants councils to be “Fit for the Future” and they have put a comprehensive package of support and financial incentives to assist councils achieve this, requiring them to:

- a) enhance their own financial sustainability
- b) be effective in the delivery of infrastructure and services
- c) be more efficient
- d) be of sufficient scale to engage across community, industry and government.

Councils will need to submit a proposal on how they intend to become “Fit for the Future” by 30 June 2015.

This review will be assessed independently and councils who are Fit for the Future will be eligible for incentives and support - cheaper finance options, simplified reporting requirements, priority access to State funding and grants and options for additional planning powers.

The aim is for NSW councils to be financially sound, operating efficiently and in a strong position to guide community growth and deliver quality services.

Some councils have been identified as needing to merge to become Fit for the Future. This is not proposed for Wollondilly Council, with the focus of this approach being more on metropolitan councils and very small rural councils. (Note that Camden, Campbelltown and Wingecarribee are also NOT proposed for merger).

For councils to meet the infrastructure and service needs of their communities they need to be “financially sustainable”. This is defined as a council which, over the long term, is able to generate sufficient funds to provide the level and scope of infrastructure and services agreed with its community through the Integrated Planning & Reporting Process.

The criteria and benchmarks to determine whether a council is **financially sustainable** and **able to be effective in the delivery of infrastructure and services** relate to matters such as:

- *Operating performance ratio* – whether we run at a deficit or have a balanced budget
- *Own source revenue ratio* – how much we rely on grants and external revenue sources



**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

- *Infrastructure and asset backlog, maintenance and renewal ratios* – all about the condition of our assets and infrastructure and what needs to be spent to bring them up to standard
- *Debt service ratio* – how much debt we have to service with loan repayments.

For Council to perform well against these criteria, an SRV is critical. If Council does not have an SRV we will be incapable of becoming Fit for the Future.

As part of the “Fit for the Future” June 2015 submission each council will be asked to look at its current situation and consider the future needs of its community and the recommendations of the Independent Panel. This issue will be included in Council’s conversations with the community during the SRV engagement process.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

It has been well documented that most Councils across NSW (including Wollondilly Shire Council) have not been able to afford to maintain their infrastructure to a satisfactory standard, resulting in an increasing infrastructure maintenance gap year after year.

In order to close this gap and become Fit for the Future it is necessary to have an SRV in order to allocate more funds towards infrastructure maintenance.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Addressing Your Future Needs Newsletter Mail Out

**RECOMMENDATION**

1. That Council notes the outcomes of the Special Rate Variation community engagement process.
2. That Council notify IPART of its intention to apply for a Special Rate Variation (on the understanding that this does not in any way commit Council to applying for an SRV as this is a matter yet to be resolved and may be subject to alterations as a result of the community engagement process).



**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014

# Addressing Your **OUR** future needs



ADDRESSING YOUR FUTURE NEEDS  
wollondilly2033.com.au/srv

Like most NSW councils, Wollondilly Shire Council is faced with the challenge of making sure we have enough money to look after the Shire's infrastructure into the future - roads, footpaths, bridges, stormwater drains, parks, libraries and community buildings. We know that our community places a high priority on the maintenance of our Shire's infrastructure, and in particular our road network, so the current trend of deteriorating infrastructure needs to be reversed.

While we understand that rate rises of any kind are never welcome we believe a Special Rate Variation is a necessary course of action in order to meet the needs of our community.

**Without a Special Rate Variation we won't be able to maintain our essential infrastructure and services.**

Inside this newsletter you'll find three options being considered. Each has varying consequences regarding infrastructure and service quality over time. We need your support to make some important decisions so please take the time to read this newsletter and give us your feedback.

### WHAT IS A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION?

Since 1977, Council revenues have been regulated in NSW under "rate pegging". The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) sets a rate peg which limits the amount by which Councils can increase their rate revenue from one year to the next. For many years the rate peg limit has not kept pace with the financial needs of Councils in NSW and residents' needs for appropriate services.

However, Councils are able to apply to IPART for a Special Rate Variation to increase their general rate income by more than the rate pegging amount. In 2014, of the 152 Councils in NSW, 32 applied to IPART for a Special Rate Variation.

### WHY DO WE NEED A SPECIAL RATE VARIATION?

Council is responsible for maintaining more than **half a billion dollars of assets.**

Our long term financial modelling currently estimates that Council faces an \$80 million deficit at the end of ten years unless there is a significant change to expenditure or revenue.

We are working hard to ensure we are as efficient as possible and are continually reviewing ways to reduce expenditure. However, the most overwhelming contributor towards this future deficit is our infrastructure maintenance backlog.

Our Shire is made up of 17 towns and villages, and is vast in relation to our low population of approximately 46,000 people. As a result we have high infrastructure maintenance costs, particularly on roads, relative to a small rate base.

Each year there is an asset maintenance funding shortfall and as a result the condition of our infrastructure is getting progressively worse.

Additionally, our Shire will experience significant growth with our population expected to grow substantially over the next 20 years and beyond. Although the rates from new residential growth will significantly fund future infrastructure, it will not necessarily cover the maintenance costs of our existing infrastructure.

The proposed Special Rate Variation is therefore necessary to maintain and manage our *current and future* infrastructure, and to enable us to continue to deliver quality services in line with the expectations of our growing community.

Wollondilly Shire Council is responsible for:

840 kms of Roads  
90 Parks and Reserves

78 Bridges  
19 Halls  
13 Sports Fields  
33 Playgrounds

Governance

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014

## The Previous Special Rate Variation

In early 2011, we applied for a Special Rate Variation for the purpose of reducing the backlog in infrastructure maintenance and renewal. We were originally seeking a Special Rate Variation of 8% per annum over 7 years, which was then reduced to 6.7% per annum over 7 years following extensive community consultation. An increase of only 6% per annum over 3 years was subsequently approved. This fell substantially short of providing the required funds to address the mounting infrastructure maintenance gap.

Although we received less than we expected, we were still able to complete a number of projects to improve infrastructure and services for our community with the funds generated from the Special Rate Variation.

The Special Rate Variation funds also allowed us to access the State Government's Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) loans to provide the early delivery of a number of much needed infrastructure works.

Some of the projects completed using the Special Rate Variation funds and LIRS loans included:

- Reconstruction of John Street, The Oaks
- Replacement of timber bridges on Bargo River Road, Couridjah; Cawdor Rd, Cawdor; and Spring Creek Road, Mt Hunter
- Playground upgrades at Tahmoor, Buxton, Bargo, Appin, Warragamba and Silverdale
- Tennis court repairs in Picton, Douglas Park and Yanderra
- Installation of sportsfield lighting at Oakdale, Tahmoor and Appin
- Over \$900,000 spent on building repairs shire wide



Governance



**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

There are three options which we would like you to consider as they all have varying impacts on our infrastructure and service quality.

<p>Option 1 <b>Deteriorate</b></p>	<p>Option 2 <b>Stabilise</b></p>	<p>Option 3 <b>Improve</b></p>
<p>No Special Rate Variation  (Rates would increase by the annual rate peg amount - estimated to be around 3% per annum)</p>	<p>Special Rate Variation 8.5% per annum over 4 years (Rates would increase by a total of 8.5% per annum - including the annual rate peg amount - over a fixed four year period 2015/16 to 2018/19) At the end of the four year period the Special Rate Variation increase will be built into the rate base</p>	<p>Special Rate Variation 10.8% per annum over 4 years (Rates would increase by a total of 10.8% per annum - including the annual rate peg amount - over a fixed four year period 2015/16 to 2018/19) At the end of the four year period the Special Rate Variation increase will be built into the rate base</p>
<p><b>Income</b></p>		
<p>\$80 million shortfall over 10 years</p>	<p>Reduce the shortfall by generating an additional \$54.5 million over 10 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$40.5 million will be spent on major roads and bridge works;</li> <li>• \$5 million on bridges, footpaths, kerb, and line marking maintenance;</li> <li>• \$2 million on new footpaths and kerb and gutter;</li> <li>• \$3.5 million on building maintenance;</li> <li>• \$3.5 million on parks, playgrounds and sportsfield maintenance</li> </ul>	<p>Eliminate the shortfall by generating an additional \$80 million over 10 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$60 million will be spent on major roads and bridge works;</li> <li>• \$6.5 million on bridges, footpaths, kerb, and line marking maintenance;</li> <li>• \$5.5 million on new footpaths and kerb and gutter;</li> <li>• \$4 million on building maintenance;</li> <li>• \$4 million on parks, playgrounds and sportsfield maintenance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Infrastructure Maintenance</b></p>		
<p>Our infrastructure would deteriorate further. This means we will see worsening roads and continuing deterioration of facilities such as playgrounds and community buildings.</p>	<p>Council would be able to stabilise the current deteriorating condition of our infrastructure as we would be able to fund our maintenance expenditure. This means the current condition of our roads, facilities and other infrastructure will be gradually improved through essential maintenance.</p>	<p>Council would be able to deliver better roads, facilities and other infrastructure sooner as we would increase and bring forward much needed maintenance expenditure. We would also fully implement a preventative maintenance regime to reduce future costs to the community.</p>
<p><b>New Infrastructure</b></p>		
<p>Council would have virtually no capacity for new capital works (apart from developer contributions and grants). This means Council will have difficulty funding new infrastructure such as kerb and gutter, footpaths, shared pathways, open space improvements and new community facilities.</p>	<p>Council will have some additional funds (in addition to developer contributions and grants) available to provide new infrastructure.</p>	<p>Council will have more funds available to provide new infrastructure.</p>
<p><b>Services</b></p>		
<p>Council would need to consider a significant reduction in a wide range of Council services in order to address the funding shortfall issues.</p>	<p>Council could maintain its current range of services.</p>	<p>Council would be able to deliver a wide range of services.</p>

Governance

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

How will this affect you?

The table below estimates the rate increases that would occur under each of the three options being considered. The table provides a comparison for differing rate amounts, based on rates payable this year. To use this table look at the rate amount in the grey shaded column that is closest to your rate bill for this year (2014/15). Looking across the table to the columns on the right hand side will give you an indication of how rates would rise under each of the three options. The figures in the table should only be used as a rough guide, as fluctuations in the value of your property will also have an effect on the amount of rates you pay. The figures are also based upon the assumption of a 3% rate peg being announced each year. This figure may be higher or lower in any year.

Annual Rates	Current	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$892</b>	\$919	\$946	\$975	\$1,004
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$968	\$1,050	\$1,139	\$1,236
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$988	\$1,095	\$1,213	\$1,344
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$943</b>	\$971	\$1,000	\$1,030	\$1,061
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$1,023	\$1,110	\$1,204	\$1,307
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$1,045	\$1,158	\$1,283	\$1,421
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$1,000</b>	\$1,030	\$1,061	\$1,093	\$1,126
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$1,085	\$1,177	\$1,277	\$1,386
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$1,108	\$1,228	\$1,360	\$1,507
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$1,250</b>	\$1,288	\$1,326	\$1,366	\$1,407
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$1,356	\$1,472	\$1,597	\$1,732
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$1,385	\$1,535	\$1,700	\$1,884
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$1,500</b>	\$1,545	\$1,591	\$1,639	\$1,688
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$1,628	\$1,766	\$1,916	\$2,079
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$1,662	\$1,841	\$2,040	\$2,261
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$1,750</b>	\$1,803	\$1,857	\$1,912	\$1,970
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$1,899	\$2,060	\$2,235	\$2,425
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$1,939	\$2,148	\$2,380	\$2,638
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$2,000</b>	\$2,060	\$2,122	\$2,185	\$2,251
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$2,170	\$2,354	\$2,555	\$2,772
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$2,216	\$2,455	\$2,721	\$3,014
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$2,250</b>	\$2,318	\$2,387	\$2,459	\$2,532
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$2,441	\$2,649	\$2,874	\$3,118
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$2,493	\$2,762	\$3,061	\$3,391
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$2,500</b>	\$2,575	\$2,652	\$2,732	\$2,814
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$2,713	\$2,943	\$3,193	\$3,465
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$2,770	\$3,069	\$3,401	\$3,768
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$2,750</b>	\$2,833	\$2,917	\$3,005	\$3,095
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$2,984	\$3,237	\$3,513	\$3,811
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$3,047	\$3,376	\$3,741	\$4,145
● Option 1 - Rate Peg (3% pa)	<b>\$3,000</b>	\$3,090	\$3,183	\$3,278	\$3,377
● Option 2 - 8.5% x 4 yrs		\$3,255	\$3,532	\$3,832	\$4,158
● Option 3 - 10.8% x 4 yrs		\$3,324	\$3,683	\$4,081	\$4,521

Governance

ADDRESSING YOUR FUTURE NEEDS  
[wollondilly2033.com.au/srv](http://wollondilly2033.com.au/srv)

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

## What else are we doing to maximise efficiency?

We work hard to ensure that we are as efficient as possible. To achieve continuous quality improvements and a “best-practice” approach to all of our operations we continually review the ways our services are conducted, and we have implemented a wide range of initiatives to ensure we use resources wisely, such as:

- Continuing and expanding resource sharing opportunities with other Councils
- Being smarter with purchasing, procurement and contracting
- Maximising external funding and grant opportunities
- Undertaking internal audits of all our key business activities and processes
- Focusing on staff performance and development
- Risk minimisation across the organisation to reduce liabilities and insurance premiums
- Initiatives to reduce energy and utility costs
- Making use of subsidised loans via the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme
- Long term financial planning

In its 2012/13 review of NSW Councils, the Department of Local Government found that Wollondilly Shire Council has the 17th lowest governance and administration costs per capita compared to 152 Councils in NSW.

(Circular to Councils 14/17 - Comparative Information on NSW Local Government 2012-13)

Comparative Data 2012/13	Wollondilly	Camden	Campbelltown	Penrith	Hawkesbury
No. Equivalent Full Time Staff	208	304	623	1042	273
Population	45,322	60,546	152,612	186,938	64,592
Total Revenue	\$45.9m	\$129.5m	\$131.4m	\$217.2m	\$75.99m
Total Expenditure	\$44.9m	\$71.4m	\$133m	\$171.1m	\$64.7m
Total Revenue per capita	\$1013	\$2139	\$861	\$1162	\$1176
Expenditure per capita	\$990	\$1,179	\$871	\$915	\$1002
Governance and Admin expense per capita	\$115	\$272	\$157	\$165	\$70
Roads, Bridges & Footpath expenses per capita	\$315	\$270	\$107	\$133	\$183
Metre road length per capita	18m	8m	5m	6m	16m

**Governance**





**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

## How to have your say

The future of our Shire affects us all so we want your views. There are lots of ways you can get involved. We will be out in the community over the coming months and want to talk to you about the Special Rate Variation options we are considering.

To see the full schedule of community conversation opportunities head to [www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv](http://www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv)

You can drop in and see us at Picton Shire Hall from 12pm-2pm on the following dates:

- 7<sup>th</sup>  
October  
2014**
- 8<sup>th</sup>  
October  
2014**
- 9<sup>th</sup>  
October  
2014**
- 10<sup>th</sup>  
October  
2014**

Alternatively, attend one of our Community Meetings from 6pm-8pm at the following locations:

- 25<sup>th</sup>  
September  
2014**  
Warragamba  
Town Hall
- 16<sup>th</sup>  
October  
2014**  
Tahmoor CWA  
Hall
- 23<sup>rd</sup>  
October  
2014**  
Appin  
Community  
Hall

**31<sup>ST</sup>  
OCTOBER  
2014**

Get submissions in

**17<sup>TH</sup>  
NOVEMBER  
2014**

Report to Council detailing the community engagement results and presenting draft IP&R\* documents for exhibition

**16<sup>TH</sup>  
FEBRUARY  
2015**

Report to Council detailing the Special Rate Variation and IP&R exhibition outcomes and recommendations. Council to make final decision regarding a Special Rate Variation application to IPART

\*Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) is effectively Wollondilly Shire Councils business planning framework.

### Need more information?

To find out more information about the proposed Special Rate Variation head to [www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv](http://www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv) or phone (02) 4677 1100.

### You can also make a submission about the Special Rate Variation by:

**Mail:**  
PO Box 21, Picton NSW 2571

**Email:**  
[srv@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au](mailto:srv@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au)

**Phone:**  
(02) 4677 1100

**Web:**  
[www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv](http://www.wollondilly2033.com.au/srv)

**Follow us:**  
Facebook /wollondilly  
Twitter @wdillycouncil

**Governance**

ADDRESSING YOUR FUTURE NEEDS  
[wollondilly2033.com.au/srv](http://wollondilly2033.com.au/srv)

**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014

## Breaking News Fit for the Future

On 10 September 2014, The NSW Government announced their response to the Independent Local Government Review Panel and Local Government Acts Taskforce recommendations.

The NSW Government wants Councils to be “Fit for the Future” by:

- a) Enhancing their own financial sustainability
- b) Being effective in the delivery of infrastructure and services
- c) Being more efficient
- d) Being of sufficient scale to engage across community, industry and government

Councils will need to submit a proposal on how they intend to become “Fit for the Future” by 30 June 2015.

This review will be assessed independently and Councils who are “Fit for the Future” will be eligible for incentives and support such as cheaper finance options, simplified reporting requirements, priority access to State funding and grants and options for additional planning powers.

**We are having this conversation with the community because we want to ensure that we are “Fit for the Future” and the Special Rate Variation is an important step towards achieving this.**

To find out more information about “Fit for the Future” head to [www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://www.fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au)

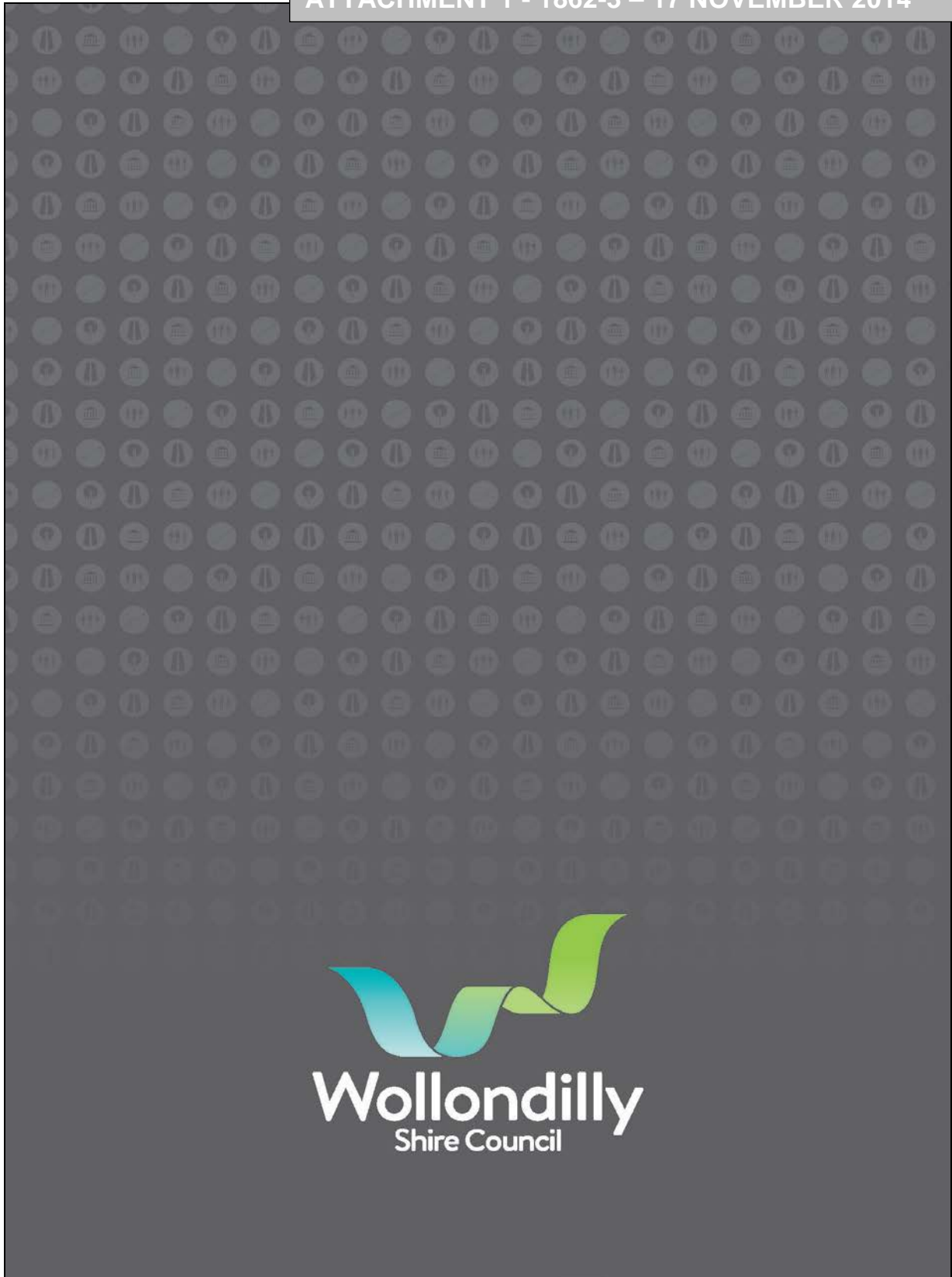
**Fit for the Future**





**GO4 – Proposed Special Rate Variation – Community Engagement Report**

**ATTACHMENT 1 - 1862-3 – 17 NOVEMBER 2014**



**Governance**

## Addressing Your Future Needs: Community Engagement Activities & Outcomes Report

---

The “Addressing Your Future Needs” Community Engagement Strategy was developed in line with the International Association for Public Participation – Public Participation Spectrum Principles of:

**INFORM:**

To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.

**CONSULT:**

To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.

**INVOLVE:**

To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.

Wollondilly Shire Council’s community consultation for the Special Rate Variation proposal took place from the 15<sup>th</sup> September – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2014 and utilised a wide range of engagement methods in order to maximise community ‘reach’ and awareness.

The table below details the community consultation activities and outcomes during the engagement period.

Engagement Method	Numbers	Details
Train Station Engagements	Approximately 144 people received information about the Special Rate Variation	Held from 5:30-8am at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Picton</li> <li>- Tahmoor</li> <li>- Bargo</li> </ul>
Information Stalls with the Dilly Wanderer	26 people were engaged about the Special Rate Variation and received information	Held at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yanderra</li> <li>- The Oaks</li> <li>- Tahmoor</li> <li>- Oakdale</li> <li>- Bingara Gorge</li> <li>- Buxton</li> <li>- Appin</li> <li>- Bargo</li> <li>- Silverdale</li> <li>- Douglas Park</li> <li>- Thirlmere</li> <li>- Warragamba</li> <li>- Picton</li> </ul>
Community Events	35 people received information about the Special Rate Variation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tahmoor Uniting Church Community Garden Family Day</li> <li>- Bargo Public School Fete</li> <li>- DamFest</li> </ul>

<b>Community Meeting</b>	27 people attended in total	Held at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Warragamba Town Hall</li> <li>- Tahmoor CWA Hall</li> <li>- Appin Community Hall</li> </ul>
<b>Information &amp; Drop-In Session</b>	1 person attended the information and drop-in session	An additional evening information and drop-in session was organised. This was in response to community requests identifying that this would allow more community members the opportunity to participate in the Special Rate Variation conversation. The session was held at Warragamba Town Hall.
<b>Drop-In Q&amp;A Sessions</b>	20 people attended the drop-in Q&A sessions to discuss the Special Rate Variation options	Four sessions were held at Picton Shire Hall
<b>Emails</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All Wollondilly Shire Council staff received an email</li> <li>- 85 Council Committee Members received an email</li> <li>- 146 Community Directory contacts were sent an email</li> <li>- 383 Business Directory contacts were sent an email</li> </ul>	
<b>Special Rate Variation Newsletter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 16,936 ratepayers received a newsletter</li> </ul>	Hard copy newsletters mailed to all ratepayers in the Shire. Hard copy newsletters have also been distributed at all community engagement activities.
<b>Phone Enquiries</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 17 phone enquiries have been received regarding the Special Rate Variation</li> </ul>	
<b>Radio</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 x radio interviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 24<sup>th</sup> September 2014: Macarthur Community Radio</li> <li>- 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014: ABC Illawarra Radio</li> </ul>
<b>Media Releases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 7 x media releases</li> </ul>	
<b>Bush Telegraph</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 2 x Bush Telegraph Articles</li> <li>- 3 x Articles in mayors column</li> <li>- 1 x Bush Telegraph Advertisement</li> </ul>	Printed in the Advertiser, Chronicle & District Reporter
<b>Newspaper Advertising</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 x Quarter Page Advertisement</li> </ul>	Printed in the Advertiser, Chronicle & District Reporter
<b>Flyer Distribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 111 Businesses</li> </ul>	Distributed at Tahmoor, Warragamba,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 Neighbourhood Centre</li> <li>- 1 Preschool</li> </ul>	Silverdale, Appin, Douglas Park, Thirlmere and Picton
<b>Shopping Centre Information Stall</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30 people received information about the Special Rate Variation at Tahmoor Shopping Centre</li> <li>- 49 people received information about the Special Rate Variation at Picton Mall</li> </ul>	
<b>Promotional Material</b>		Bookmarks, flyers, FAQs, SRV Newsletter and rates flyers were available at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Picton library</li> <li>- Mobile libraries</li> <li>- Customer services</li> <li>- Tourist information centre</li> <li>- Children services</li> </ul>
<b>Special Rate Variation Business Cards</b>		200 Special Rate Variation business cards provided to depot staff to distribute to community members if needed
<b>Social Media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 42 x Social Media Posts regarding the Special Rate Variation and community consultation opportunities</li> </ul>	The average reach for special rate variation posts on Facebook was 320 people
<b>Submissions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 148 x Submissions received about the Special Rate Variation</li> </ul>	
<b>Addressing Your Future Needs Webpage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 405 x Unique Views</li> </ul>	
<b>Telephone Survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 407 residents were surveyed regarding the Special Rate Variation proposal</li> </ul>	