

## SRV APPLICATION ATTACHMENT G

Media releases, public meeting notices, newspaper articles, fact sheet,  
photos, banners, community pamphlet



TO: **COFFS COAST ADVOCATE**  
EDITION: **3 February 2018**

**EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF BELLINGEN SHIRE COUNCIL**

An Extraordinary Meeting of Council will be held at 9:00am on Wednesday 7 February 2018. The agenda item will be "Special Variation – Application to IPART".

The Business Paper (Agenda) will be published on Council's website by close of business on Friday prior to the meeting.

LIZ JEREMY, GENERAL MANAGER

Phone: 6655 7300 Fax: 6655 2310

Email: [council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au) Website: [www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au)

## DO NOT CHANGE THE WIDTH OF THE TABLE

TO: Bellingen Courier Sun/Don Dorriggo  
EDITION: 13 December 2017 and 10 January 2018

SPECIAL VARIATION – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE UPDATED LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN & DELIVERY PROGRAM	
<p>Notice is given of the public exhibition of documents relating to the proposed 2018/19 to 2020/21 special variation. Council at its Ordinary Meeting, held on 22 November, resolved to place the updated Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program on public exhibition for a period of six weeks and that written submissions be invited for consideration by Council.</p> <p>The documents will be on public exhibition from Thursday 14 December 2017 until Tuesday 26 January 2018 and will be available for viewing during normal business hours at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Administrative Centre, Hyde Street Bellingen</li> <li>• Bellingen Library</li> <li>• Urunga Library</li> <li>• Dorriggo Library</li> </ul> <p>The documents will also be available for viewing on the 'Create' Bellingen website at <a href="http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/">http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/</a>.</p> <p>Council invites interested parties to make a written submission regarding the documents. Submissions will be received up until 4.30pm Friday 26 January 2018.</p> <p>Written submissions must be titled 'Special Variation 2018/19' and either addressed to:</p> <p>The General Manager Bellingen Shire Council PO Box 117 BELLINGEN NSW 2454</p> <p>Or submitted by email to: <a href="mailto:council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au">council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au</a></p> <p>For further details, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.</p>	
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## DO NOT CHANGE THE WIDTH OF THE TABLE

TO: Bellingen Courier Sun/Don Dorrigó  
EDITION: 24 January 2018

SPECIAL VARIATION – PUBLIC EXHIBITION PERIOD ENDS 26 JANUARY	
<p>The public exhibition period relating to the proposed 2018/19 to 2020/21 special variation closes this Friday 26 January.</p> <p>Council at its Ordinary Meeting, held on 22 November, resolved to place the updated Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program on public exhibition for a period of six weeks. During this time, written submissions are invited for consideration by Council.</p> <p>The documents have been on public exhibition since Thursday 14 December 2017 at the following locations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Administrative Centre, Hyde Street Bellingén</li> <li>• Bellingén Library</li> <li>• Urunga Library</li> <li>• Dorrigó Library</li> </ul> <p>The documents are also available for viewing on the 'Create' Bellingén website at <a href="http://create.bellingén.nsw.gov.au/">http://create.bellingén.nsw.gov.au/</a>.</p> <p>Any interested parties wanting to make a written submission regarding the documents have until 4.30pm Friday 26 January 2018 to do so.</p> <p>Written submissions must be titled 'Special Variation 2018/19' and either addressed to:</p> <p>The General Manager Bellingén Shire Council PO Box 117 BELLINGEN NSW 2454</p> <p>Or submitted by email to: <a href="mailto:council@bellingén.nsw.gov.au">council@bellingén.nsw.gov.au</a></p> <p>For further details, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.</p>	
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## DO NOT CHANGE THE WIDTH OF THE TABLE

TO: Bellingen Courier Sun/Don Dorriggo  
EDITION: 17 January 2018

SPECIAL VARIATION – COMMUNITY DROP IN SESSIONS	
<p>Bellingen Council staff and Councillors invite its community to attend a 'drop in' session regarding the 3 year proposed special variation.</p> <p>Council has been engaging with its community regarding changes in its Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program. These changes reflect Council's intention to apply for a special variation, from 1 July 2018, to assist with priority road resurfacing and bridge repair works.</p> <p>The 3 'drop in' sessions will provide the community with an opportunity to ask questions and have conversations with Council staff and Councillors regarding what the special variation will mean to you as a ratepayer and the specific works to be funded.</p> <p>Drop in sessions will take place in each of the townships on the following dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Tuesday 23 January 2018 – Dorriggo Community Hall – 4pm to 6pm</b></li> <li>• <b>Wednesday 24 January 2018 – Urunga Literary Hall – 4pm to 6pm</b></li> <li>• <b>Thursday 25 January 2018 – Bellingen Memorial Hall – 4pm to 6pm</b></li> </ul> <p>Residents are encouraged to bring along their annual rates notice to see what the special variation will mean for you. Council will be providing a digital kiosk that will provide the opportunity for ratepayers to see how much their rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the 3 years via a rates calculator.</p> <p>Additional information including the rates calculator, FAQs, maps and other key documentation is available on the Bellingen 'Create' website at <a href="https://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/">https://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/</a>.</p> <p>For any enquiries, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.</p>	
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TO: BELLINGEN COURIER SUN  
EDITION: WEDNESDAY 10 JANUARY 2018

**SPECIAL VARIATION – PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF  
THE UPDATED LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN & DELIVERY PROGRAM**

Notice is given of the public exhibition of documents relating to the proposed 2018/19 to 2020/21 special variation. Council at its Ordinary Meeting, held on 13 December, resolved to place the updated Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program on public exhibition for a period of six weeks and that written submissions be invited for consideration by Council.

The documents will be on public exhibition from Thursday 14 December 2017 until Tuesday 26 January 2018 and will be available for viewing during normal business hours at the following locations:

- Council Administrative Centre, Hyde Street Bellingen
- Bellingen Library
- Urunga Library
- Dorrigo Library

The documents will also be available for viewing on the 'Create' Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>.

Council invites interested parties to make a written submission regarding the documents. Submissions will be received up until 4.30pm Friday 26 January 2018.

Written submissions must be titled 'Special Variation 2018/19' and either addressed to:

The General Manager, Bellingen Shire Council, PO Box 117, Bellingen NSW 2454  
Or submitted by email to: [council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au)

For further details, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm weekdays.

LIZ JEREMY, GENERAL MANAGER  
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#### CHANGES TO TRAFFIC CONDITIONS – QUEENS BATON RELAY BELLINGEN

Council is to host the Queens Baton Relay event on Thursday 1 February 2018. As a result several temporary road closures will be in place, including the State Road, Hyde Street between Crown Street and the western town limits of Bellingen from 1:30pm to 2:30pm.

A light vehicle detour will be available around the event via Crown and Oak Streets during this time.

Large vehicles, including articulated vehicles, truck and dog and other PBS combination vehicles will be held on Waterfall Way at either end of the Hyde Street road closure.

Other local streets to be **closed intermittently to all traffic** to accommodate the relay runners include:

- Park Street from Church to Oak Streets
- Bowra Street from Oak to Lovell Streets
- Lovell Street from Bowra to William Streets
- Oak Street from William to Hyde Streets.

Traffic Control will be in place for the duration of the event and motorists are requested to exercise care and to comply with the requests and directions of the traffic controllers in place.

#### SPECIAL VARIATION – COMMUNITY DROP IN SESSIONS

Bellingen Council staff and Councillors invite our community to attend a 'drop in' session regarding the 3 year proposed special variation.

Council has been engaging with the community regarding changes in its Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program. These changes reflect Council's intention to apply for a special variation, from 1 July 2018, to assist with priority road resurfacing and bridge renewal works.

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- **Tuesday 23 January 2018 – Dorrigo Community Hall – 4pm to 6pm**
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Residents are encouraged to bring along their annual rates notice to see what the special variation will mean for you. Council will be providing a digital kiosk that will provide the opportunity for ratepayers to see how much their rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the 3 years via a rates calculator.

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For any enquiries, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

#### AUSTRALIA DAY COMMUNITY AWARDS

The Bellingen Shire Australia Day Committee invite our community to attend the official awards ceremony to be held at the amphitheatre in the Morgo Street Reserve Urunga on Friday 26 January 2018.

The event will commence at 8.30am with light refreshments and be followed at 9.30am with the official Citizenship and the Australia Day Awards Ceremonies. Australia Day Ambassador, chef, restaurateur, author and businessman, David Bitton will speak about his life and work in Australia before assisting the Mayor during the ceremony.

Although seating and shade will be available please feel free to bring a rug and sit on the grassed area. For further details, please visit Council's website at [www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au)

#### CLOSURE OF WASTE FACILITIES ON AUSTRALIA DAY

Waste Facilities at Dorrigo, Bellingen and Raleigh will be closed on Australia Day, Friday 26 January 2018. Kerbside waste collections will occur as normal.

For further details, please visit Council's website at [www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au](http://www.bellingen.nsw.gov.au)

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#### CHANGES TO TRAFFIC CONDITIONS – QUEEN'S BATON RELAY BELLINGEN

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A light vehicle detour will be available around the event via Crown and Oak Streets during this time.

Large vehicles, including articulated vehicles, truck and dog and other PBS combination vehicles will be held on Waterfall Way at either end of the Hyde Street road closure for the duration of the Baton Relay event.

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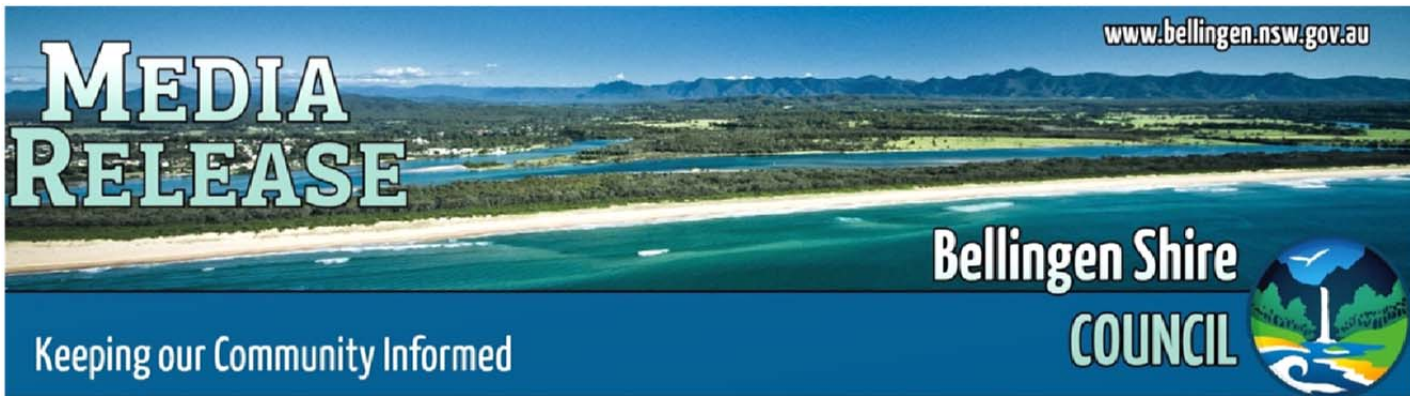
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## **SPECIAL VARIATION UPDATED DOCUMENTS ON PUBLIC EXHIBITION**

Council at its Ordinary Meeting, held on 14 December 2017 resolved to place the updated Long Term Financial Plan and Delivery Program on public exhibition for a period of six weeks and that written submissions be invited for consideration by Council in relation to its intention to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a special variation to increase its general rates.

These documents will be on public exhibition from Thursday 14 December 2017 until Tuesday 26 January 2018 and will be available for viewing during normal business hours at the following locations:

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- Bellinghen Library
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The documents will also be available to download from Council's 'Create' Community Engagement Hub at <http://create.bellinghen.nsw.gov.au>.

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Written submissions must be titled 'Special Variation 2018/19' and either addressed to:

The General Manager  
Bellinghen Shire Council  
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For further details, please contact Council on 6655 7300 between 8.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

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**Authorised by** Liz Jeremy, General Manager

**Date:** 12 December 2017

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Liz Jeremy on 6655 7300.

ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE GENERAL MANAGER,  
PO BOX 117, BELLINGHEN NSW 2454, TELEPHONE (02) 66557300, FAX (02) 66552310



# Media Release

21 December 2017

## 15 LOCAL COUNCILS NOTIFY SPECIAL VARIATION INTENTIONS

Fifteen councils across NSW have notified the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) of their intention to apply for a special variation to increase their general income above the rate peg in 2018-19.

Councils were asked to notify IPART by 15 December 2017. They have until 12 February 2018 to consult with their communities and submit their applications for a special variation increase.

The councils that lodged notifications by 15 December 2017 were:

Ballina	Kiama
Balranald	Lismore
Bellingen	Liverpool Plains
Clarence Valley	Muswellbrook
Cootamundra-Gundagai*	Randwick
Hawkesbury	Shoalhaven
Hay Shire	Willoughby
Kempsey	

\* New council created in 2016.

Under guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government in November 2017, new councils created in 2016 (other than Mid-Coast council) are not permitted to apply for a special variation in 2018-19. This policy applies to one of the councils that notified IPART (Cootamundra-Gundagai).

Special variations are the mechanism for councils to use if they want to increase their general income by more than the rate peg to fund items such as infrastructure or additional services, or to improve their financial sustainability.

The rate peg for 2018-19 is 2.3%. We determined it by measuring changes in the Local Government Cost Index, which includes changes in average costs faced by councils, and considering a factor to reflect improvements in productivity.

**Media Contact:** Julie Sheather ☎ 02 9290 8403 ☎ 0409 514 643

More information is available at [ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://ipart.nsw.gov.au)



IPART will begin assessing the applications against criteria set out in the Office of Local Government's guidelines from February 2017. These criteria include demonstrating the need for the additional income, evidence of adequate community awareness and an assessment of the reasonableness of the increase and impact on ratepayers.

Details about each council's proposal should be available from the council.

Full details about the assessment criteria for special variations and the amounts sought may be found on IPART's website [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au).

Media Contact: Julie Sheather 0409 514 643

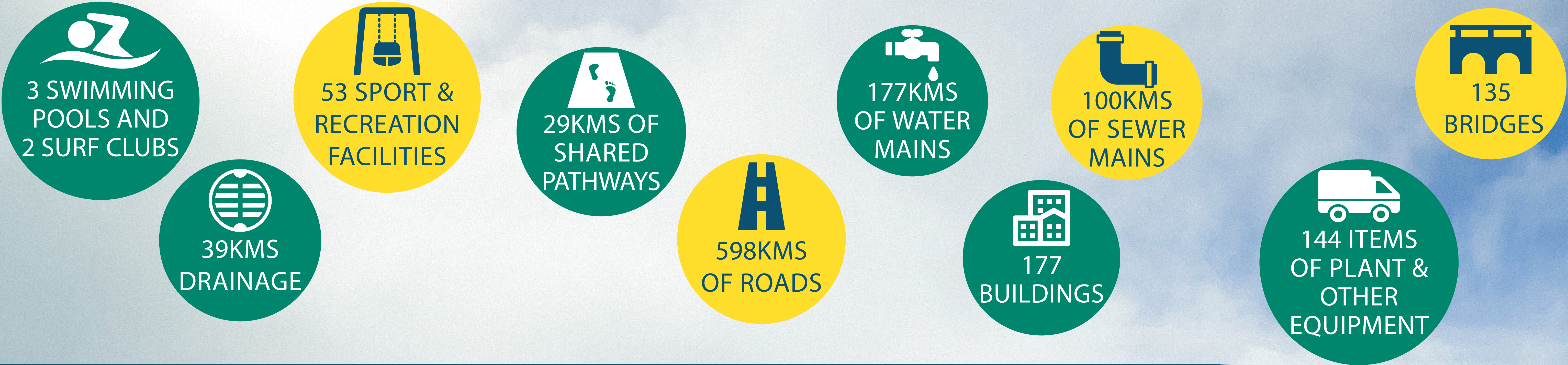
Newspaper Articles not published due to copyright concerns





# DID YOU KNOW?

Bellingen Shire Council is responsible for over \$0.5 billion worth of assets!



## WHAT HAS COUNCIL DONE TO IMPROVE ITS INFRASTRUCTURE?

Over the last few years, Council has made significant improvements to our assets in particular our road and bridge infrastructure. These works have been funded by a number of sources including Council’s revenue, State and federal grants and a special variation. Some of these improvements/achievements include:



### UNSEALED ROADS

Gravel resheeting of 20 local roads approximately 26km in length, total expenditure \$442,707  
Formation renewal grading of 31 local gravel roads approximately 35km in length, total expenditure \$376,846

RESURFACING WORKS 2016-17	
Whiskey Creek Road, Dorrigo	2.20km
Summervilles Road, Thora	2.49km
Promised Land Road, Gleniffer	1.89km
Timboon Road, Gleniffer end	0.63km
Roses Road, Gleniffer	1.60km
Gleniffer Road, Gleniffer	1.67km
Hydes Creek Road, Bellingen	1.29km
Bowraville Road, Brierfield	5.01km
Valery Road, Valery	1.64km
Mylestom Drive, Mylestom	3.60km
North Bank Road, Bellingen	1.24km
Hungry Head Road	2.70km
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25.96KM</b>



### RENEWALS

2.5km of road rehabilitation and pavement renewal works, total expenditure \$1,137,562

SHIRE ROAD RENEWAL 2016-17	
North Bank Road	0.34km
Yellow Rock Road	0.60km
Bellingen Street	0.50km
Hickory Street	0.41km
South Arm Road	0.65km
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.5KM</b>



### TIMBER BRIDGE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

All 85 local timber bridges have undergone a full condition and structural assessment. In 2016/17, the total expenditure was \$270,000. These works provide the necessary data to prioritise Council’s bridge renewal program and provides the data to apply for much needed grant funding.

### TIMBER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

A new two lane concrete bridge was constructed over Reids Creek on Kalang Road, total expenditure \$528,630.

McFaydens Bridge renewal - \$1,100,000.  
Cooks Creek Bridge renewal - \$1,063,750.



## HOW WILL A SPECIAL VARIATION AFFECT MY RATES?

The proposed special variation to address our community’s transport infrastructure, e.g., our roads and bridges is estimated to have the following impact on the rating categories:

Annual Rate Increase (%)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Cumulative
Rate Peg (Estimate)	2.3%	2.5%	2.5%	
Special Variation	3.7%	3.5%	3.5%	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL INCREASE</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>

### For Residential Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,078.59	\$1,143.30	\$1,211.90	\$1,284.62	-
Annual Increase		\$64.72	\$68.60	\$72.71	<b>\$68.68</b>
Weekly Increase		\$1.24	\$1.32	\$1.40	<b>\$1.32</b>

### For Business Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,341.20	\$1,421.67	\$1,506.97	\$1,597.39	-
Annual Increase		\$80.47	\$85.30	\$90.42	<b>\$85.40</b>
Weekly Increase		\$1.55	\$1.64	\$1.74	<b>\$1.64</b>

### For Farmland Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$2,520.26	\$2,671.48	\$2,831.76	\$3,001.67	-
Annual Increase		\$151.22	\$160.29	\$169.91	<b>\$160.47</b>
Weekly Increase		\$2.91	\$3.08	\$3.27	<b>\$3.09</b>

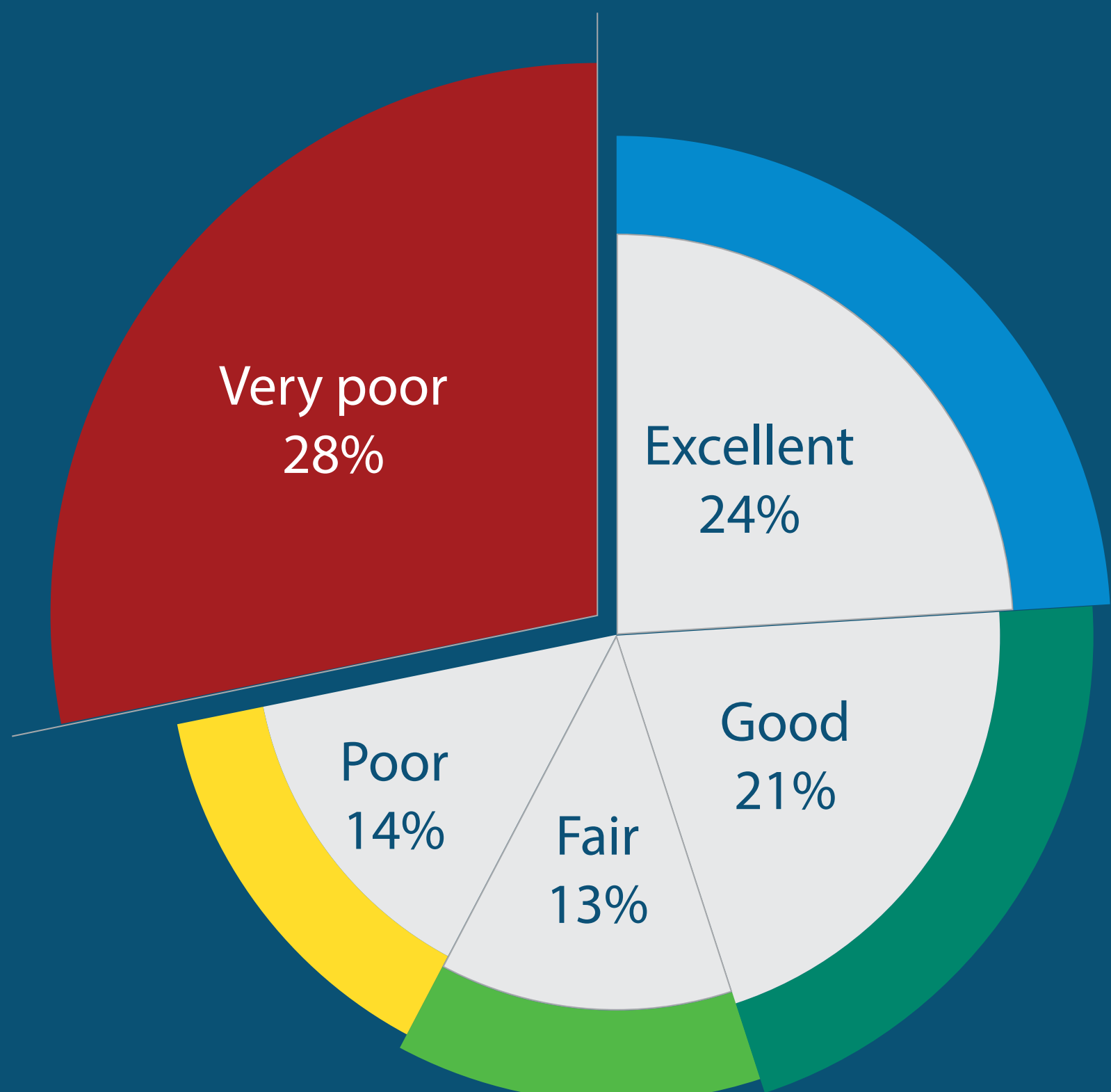
\* Water, sewer, waste and other services/charges are excluded from the above amounts with the special variation only applied to ordinary rates. The above rates are estimates only based on rate category averages. Your final rate amount will be dependent on your land value and the final rates model adopted by Council in June 2018.



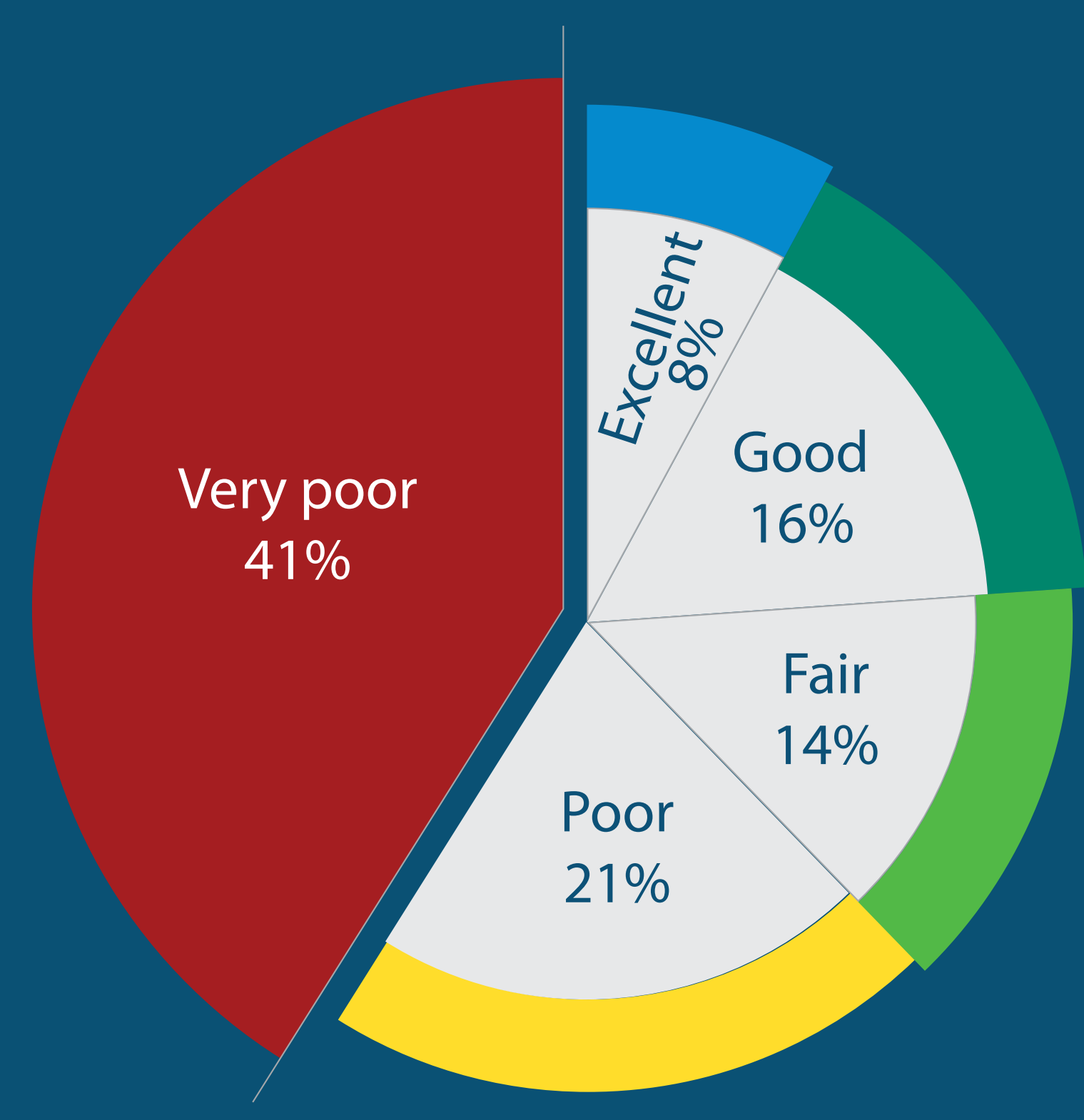




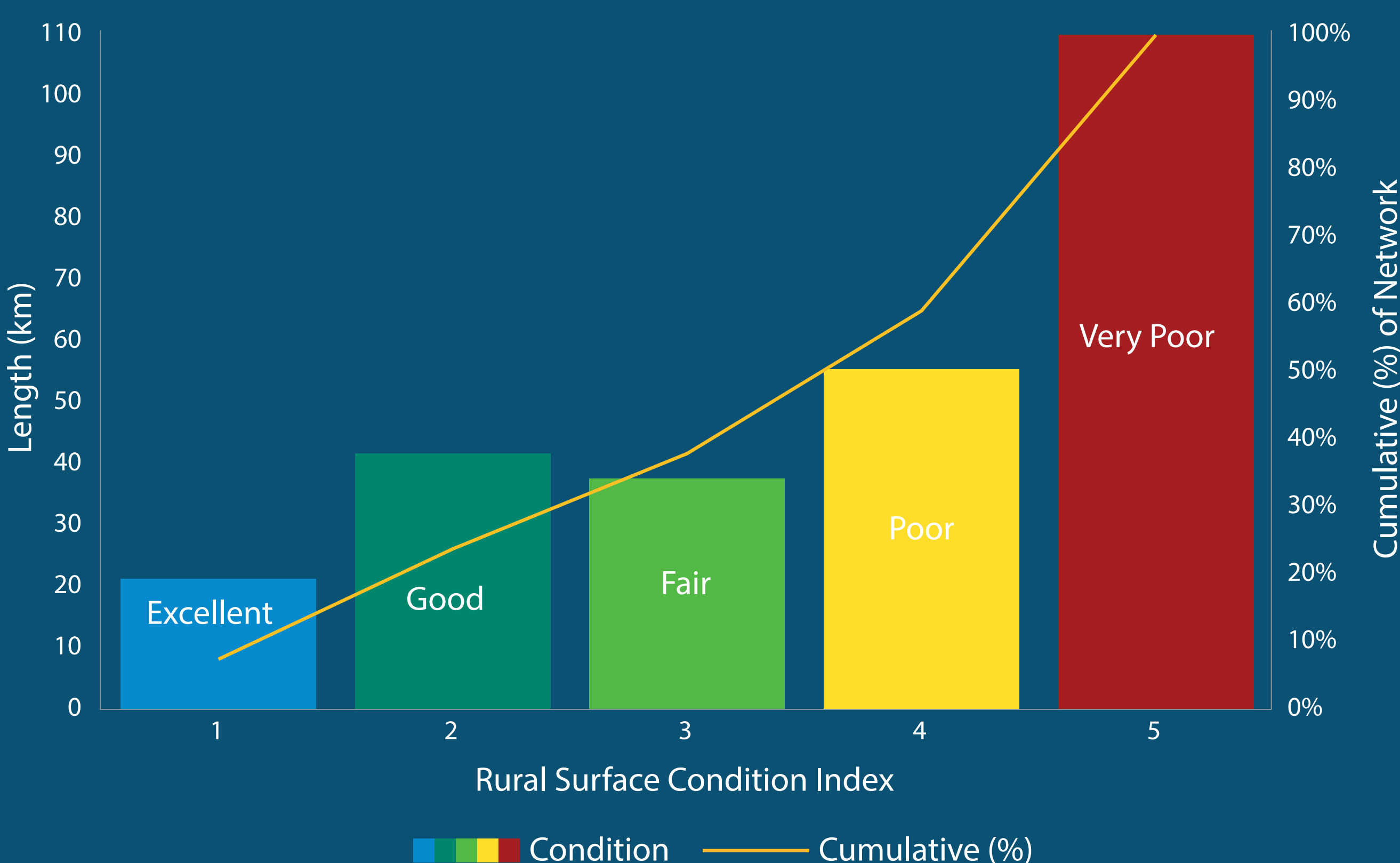
URBAN SEALED ROAD CONDITION



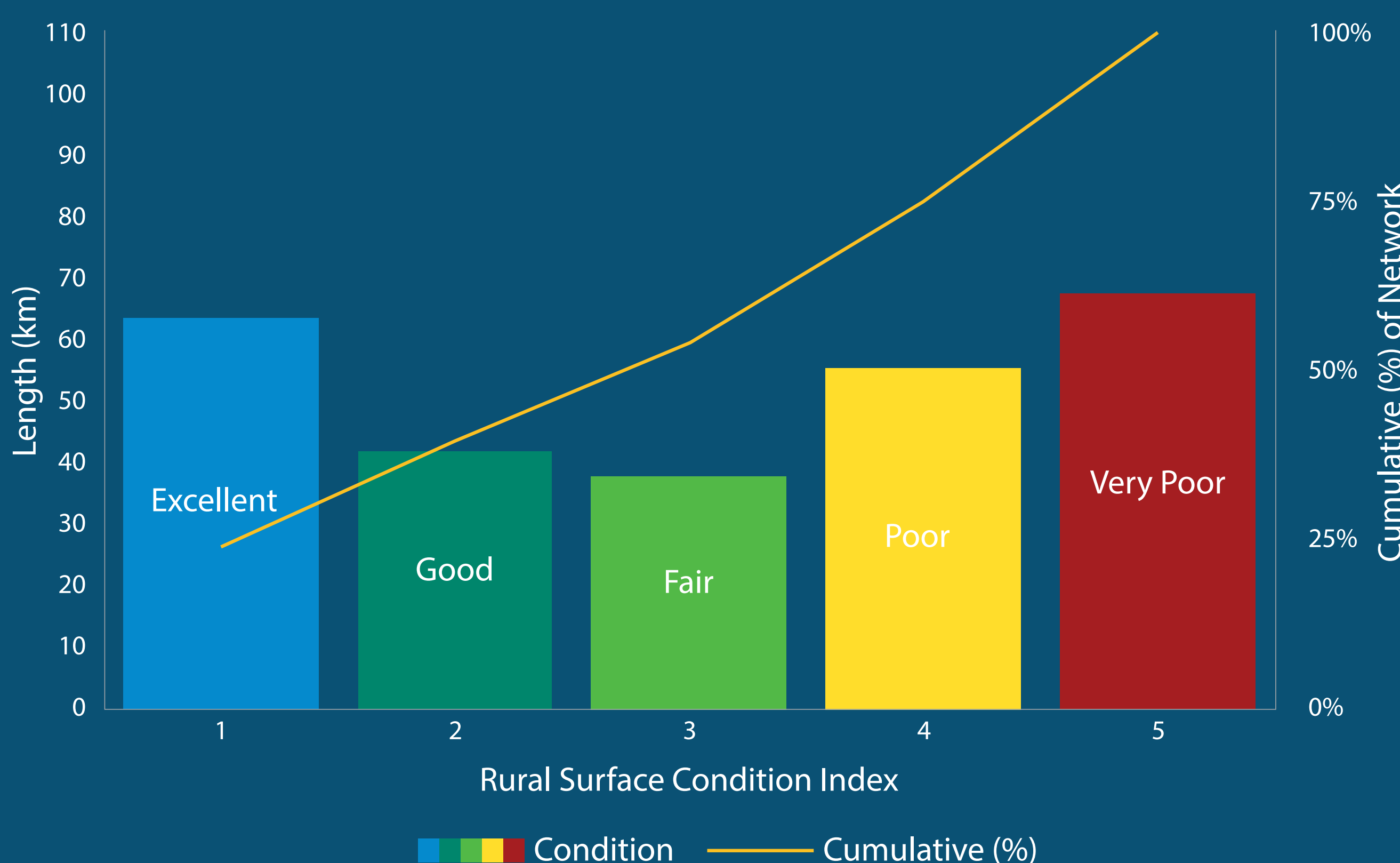
RURAL SEALED ROAD CONDITION



RURAL SEALED ROADS SURFACE CONDITION PRE-2017



RURAL SEALED ROADS SURFACE CONDITION AFTER 2017-18



RURAL RESURFACING PRIORITY ROADS (109KM) \$3.28M

Beaumonts Road	0.22km
Bowraville Road	5.00km
Coramba Road	3.90km
Darkwood Road	6.98km
Deer Vale Road	5.50km
Fernbrook Loop Road	1.50km
Gleniffer Road	6.00km
Gordonville Road	5.00km
Hungry Head Road	2.50km
Hydes Creek Road	5.64km
Kalang Road	4.50km
Keevers Drive	1.00km

Lower Bielsdown Road	2.50km
Martells Road	5.33km
Maynards Plain Road	1.04km
McGraths Road	0.20km
McIndoes Road	1.00km
Muldiva Road	4.48km
Mylestom Drive	3.50km
North Bank Road	8.00km
Old Brierfield Road	0.15km
Old Coast Road	2.00km
Old Coramba Road North	0.61km
Paddys Plain Road	0.67km

Prices Road	1.50km
Promised Land Road	2.69km
Rigney Drive	0.27km
Roses Road	1.50km
Sheperds Road	1.00km
Slingsbys Road	2.50km
South Arm Road	3.00km
Summervilles Road	1.50km
Tyringham Road	3.35km
Valery Road	4.63km
Wenonah Close	0.37km
Whiskey Creek Road	6.34km
Yellow Rock Road	3.57km

Completed

Partial completed



Legend

**Bridge Status**

- Closed
- Load Limited
- Locality

Bellingen Shire COUNCIL

Source Data: Land & Property Information NSW & Bellingen Shire Council  
Disclaimer: Map or plan accuracy is not guaranteed to be exact to scale or survey standard.  
Bellingen Shire Council accepts no responsibility for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies.

0 1 2 4 6 8 Kilometres

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File: X:\ArcGIS MXD Documents\Projects\BSC - Bridges A3.mxd

Bridge Name	Road Name	Locality	Load Limit(Tonnes)		Speed Limit
			Sign	Anticipated	
1 Adams Bridge	Slingsby Road	MEGAN	13	25	N/A
2 Breakwells Bridge	Breakwells Road	MEGAN	12	22	N/A
3 Carbis Bridge	Nakles Lane	BELLINGEN	16	30	N/A
4 Coopersbrook Creek Bridge	Coramba Road	MEGAN	13	24	N/A
5 Crossmaglen Bridge	Crossmaglen Road	VALERY	16	31	N/A
6 Enecey Bridge	Coramba Road	MEGAN	4	4	N/A
7 Johnstons Bridge	Johnstons Road	FERNBROOK	6	6	N/A
8 Justins Bridge	Darkwood Road	DARKWOOD	11	21	N/A
9 Koping River Bridge	Bowraville Road	SHEPHERD	14.5	15	10 km/h
10 Little Hydes Creek No. 2 Bridge	Little Hydes Creek Road	VALERY		Closed	
11 Little Murray Bridge	Deer Vale Road	FERNBROOK	16	31	N/A
12 McKerrons Creek Bridge	Harveys Calk Road	ROSTBOROUGH	10	17	N/A
13 Milnes Bridge	Rodgers Road East	MEGAN		Closed	
14 Picket Hill No. 2 Bridge	Martells Road	URUNGA	16	30	N/A
15 Pine Creek No. 2 Bridge	Valery Road	VALERY	14	26	N/A
16 Plains Bridge	Darkwood Road	DARKWOOD	8	15	N/A
17 Richmans Bridge	Darkwood Road	DARKWOOD	16	31	N/A
18 Rodgers Bridge	Rodgers Road West	MEGAN	5	5	N/A
19 Rows Bridge	Rows Road	BELLINGEN	18	34	N/A
20 Swans Bridge	Marutts Road	BRIERFIELD	15	29	N/A
21 Smiths Lane	Smiths Lane	DORRIGO	5	5	N/A
22 Talwood Point Bridge	Promised Land Road	GLENIFFER	3	3	N/A
23 Whiskey Creek Bridge	Whiskey Creek Road	BIELSDOWN HILLS	12	21	N/A
24 McIndoes Bridge	Gordonville Road	GLENIFFER	15	15	N/A

Closed and Load Limited Bridges as at 25 October 2017

TEN YEAR CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Total
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT/OTHER											
Plant Replacement - Light/Major/Minor	1,819,000	1,297,250	1,699,506	1,756,969	1,637,038	1,491,314	784,597	1,667,887	1,820,887	1,935,071	15,909,519
IT Hardware and Software	287,280	406,040	159,880	38,600	24,600	49,470	24,600	38,600	39,470	24,600	1,093,140
Other Capital Works	487,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	1,027,000
Total Plant and Equipment	2,593,280	1,763,290	1,919,386	1,855,569	1,721,638	1,600,784	869,197	1,766,487	1,920,357	2,019,671	18,029,659
ROADS AND FOOTPATHS											
Roads - Renewals	2,404,000	1,766,194	2,638,424	2,036,270	622,275	521,862	1,037,737	1,287,361	499,545	515,102	13,328,770
Roads - Heavy Patching and Resealing (SRV Funded)	591,220	753,508	699,979	717,478	735,415	753,801	772,646	791,962	811,761	832,055	7,459,825
Roads - Gravel Resheeting (Renewals)	205,000	210,125	215,378	220,763	226,282	231,939	237,737	243,681	249,773	256,017	2,296,693
Roads - Shoulder Resheeting Sealed Roads (Renewals)	51,250	52,531	53,845	55,191	56,570	57,985	59,434	60,920	62,443	64,004	574,173
Roads - Unsealed Roads Heavy Formation (Renewals)	205,000	210,125	215,378	220,763	226,282	231,939	237,737	243,681	249,773	256,017	2,296,693
Roads - Unsealed Roads Heavy Formation (Renewals)	61,500	63,038	64,613	66,229	67,884	69,582	71,321	73,104	74,932	76,805	689,008
Roads - Regional Roads (Renewals)	150,000	531,849	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	1,881,849
Main Street Renewal	428,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	428,400
Roads - New Assets/Upgrade	1,210,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,210,000
Total Roads	5,306,370	3,587,370	4,037,617	3,466,693	2,084,708	2,017,106	2,566,613	2,850,709	2,098,226	2,150,000	30,165,412
BRIDGES											
Bridge - Renewals	2,885,625	1,755,313	1,556,431	1,431,179	1,865,251	1,554,677	1,465,089	1,504,017	1,543,917	1,072,782	16,634,281
Bridge - Renewals (SRV Funded)	-	-	92,000	379,882	387,079	394,456	402,017	409,767	417,712	425,854	2,908,767
Total Bridges	2,885,625	1,755,313	1,648,431	1,811,061	2,252,330	1,949,133	1,867,106	1,913,784	1,961,629	1,498,636	19,543,048
Total General Fund	10,785,275	7,105,972	7,605,434	7,133,323	6,058,676	5,567,024	5,302,916	6,530,980	5,980,212	5,668,307	67,738,119





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) | SPECIAL RATE VARIATION

## WHAT IS A SPECIAL VARIATION?

A special variation allows a council to increase its general income above the rate peg, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW). Special variations can be for one or several years, and can be temporary or permanently retained in the rates base. Each year, councils wishing to apply for a special variation make a formal request to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in February. The applications are assessed against criteria listed in the Office of Local Government's Guidelines. The Guidelines include undertaking long term financial planning, ensuring community awareness of the need and extent of the proposed increase in rates, and consideration of the impact on ratepayers as well as the community's capacity and willingness to pay. In addition, councils must meet criteria related to productivity improvements.

## WHAT IS THE RATE PEG?

The rate peg is the maximum percentage amount by which a council may increase its general income for the year. For most councils, general income consists entirely of rates income. For a small number of councils, general income also includes some annual charges such as drainage levies. The rate peg does not apply to stormwater, waste collection, water and sewerage charges. IPART has set the rate peg for 2018/19 at 2.3%.

## HOW THE RATE PEG IS SET?

Councils have no say in how the rate peg is set. Prior to 2010, the Minister for Local Government set the rate peg. Since then, the rate peg is set by IPART and is mainly based on the Local Government Cost Index (LGCI).

The LGCI measures price changes over the previous year for the goods and labour an average council will use.

## WHY IS A SPECIAL VARIATION PROPOSED?

Our community has consistently told us that assets like roads and bridges are important to them and we need to improve their condition. In 2014, the NSW State Government initiated its Fit for the Future local government reform program that required all NSW councils to submit a proposal demonstrating plans to achieve long term financial sustainability, better manage our assets and become more efficient in the way we deliver services.

In response to this, Council has undertaken a significant planning process and has identified the need for a 6% rate rise per year for 3 years (19.1% cumulative increase). The planning process has identified roads and bridges as the key priority that we need to address.

Condition assessments were undertaken on our roads and bridges indicating 109kms of rural and 29kms of urban roads were in urgent need of resealing. It also indicated that 22 out of the 185 bridges need to be load limited with another 48 in poor condition. While work has commenced to address these issues, more work needs to be done including an additional allocation of funding.

## WHERE WILL THE EXTRA INCOME BE SPENT?

The additional income generated as part of the special variation will target our priority roads in need of urgent resealing repairs along with those bridges currently under load limits and further identified as needing rehabilitation or replacement.

Without a proposed special variation, Council's budget does not allow us to maintain and renew assets as fast as they are deteriorating. The special variation will allow urgent works to be undertaken bringing our transport infrastructure program of works forward.

- The SV will allow Council to address the \$7.5M reseal program over the next 10 years. This means our entire sealed road network will be resealed every 15 years (Approx. 400kms).
- The SV will allow Council to address the \$19.5M bridge renewals program over the life of the LTFP.
- A minimum of \$379K to be allocated to the bridge renewal program from 2020 onwards
- SV will allow Council to renew approximately 1 bridge per year.

## HOW LONG IS THE PROPOSED SPECIAL VARIATION FOR?

If approved, the special variation would be a permanent, three year increase commencing from 2018/19 to 2020/21. After the 3 years, annual increases will return to the rate peg set by IPART.

## HOW WILL A SPECIAL VARIATION AFFECT MY RATES?

The proposed special variation to address our community's transport infrastructure, e.g., our roads and bridges is estimated to have the following impact on the rating categories:

Annual Rate Increase (%)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Cumulative
Rate Peg (Estimate)	2.3%	2.5%	2.5%	
Special Variation	3.7%	3.5%	3.5%	
<b>TOTAL ANNUAL INCREASE</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>19.1%</b>

### For Residential Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,078.59	\$1,143.30	\$1,211.90	\$1,284.62	-
Annual Increase		\$64.72	\$68.60	\$72.71	<b>\$68.68</b>
Weekly Increase		\$1.24	\$1.32	\$1.40	<b>\$1.32</b>

### For Business Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,341.20	\$1,421.67	\$1,506.97	\$1,597.39	-
Annual Increase		\$80.47	\$85.30	\$90.42	<b>\$85.40</b>
Weekly Increase		\$1.55	\$1.64	\$1.74	<b>\$1.64</b>

### For Farmland Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$2,520.26	\$2,671.48	\$2,831.76	\$3,001.67	-
Annual Increase		\$151.22	\$160.29	\$169.91	<b>\$160.47</b>
Weekly Increase		\$2.91	\$3.08	\$3.27	<b>\$3.09</b>

\* Water, sewer, waste and other services/charges are excluded from the above amounts with the special variation only applied to ordinary rates. The above rates are estimates only based on rate category averages. Your final rate amount will be dependent on your land value and the final rates model adopted by Council in June 2018. Should the special variation not be approved, only the rate peg will apply to general rates.

## CAN I FIND OUT WHAT MY FUTURE RATES WILL BE?

In order to find out what the special variation means to you, Council has designed a rates calculator that will provide information on how much your rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the three years. The rates calculator is available on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>. The rates calculator will also be available on our digital kiosk at each of the drop in sessions.

Please note: This calculator is provided for general information purposes. This calculator provides an estimate only and is subject to change. Your final rate amount will be dependent on your land value and the final rates model(s) adopted by Council.

## WHAT OTHER OPTIONS HAS COUNCIL CONSIDERED?

The consideration of a special variation is only one of a number of options Council has considered in order to improve our overall financial performance and better manage and maintain infrastructure. An increase to rates is never the first option. Council is constantly looking at ways to achieve long term financial sustainability, better manage our assets and become more efficient in the way we deliver services. There are a number of the initiatives Council has undertaken in recent years to assist in becoming more efficient. Some of these include:

- ✓ Human resourcing savings (workers compensation, learning/development savings, leave liability reductions etc.)
- ✓ Organisational reviews (implemented more efficient ways of doing business)
- ✓ Saving from contract negotiations (banking services, print services, regional procurement etc.)
- ✓ Energy efficiency initiatives (solar and other green initiatives etc.)
- ✓ Transitioning from paper to electronic communication channels
- ✓ Increased income from sourcing additional income streams (RMS State road works, private works)
- ✓ Sourcing additional grant revenue

## WHY IS COUNCIL CONSULTING OVER THE CHRISTMAS AND JANUARY HOLIDAY PERIOD?

The time frame has been set by the Office of Local Government.

Applications for a special variation close 12 February, 2018. In order for Council to consider feedback from the community as well as meet the criteria under IPART's assessment, consultation, feedback and engagement needs to occur now.

The guidelines for applying for a special variation were released by the Office of Local Government on Thursday 9 November 2017. An outline of the timeline includes:

Activity	Timeframe
Council resolution notifying intent to apply	22 November 2017
Community engagement	14 December 2017 – 26 January 2018
IPART notification to apply	15 December 2017
IP&R document exhibition period	14 December 2017 – 26 January 2018
Council resolution - application to IPART	7 February 2018
SRV application	12 February 2018
IPART announcement	15 May 2018

## HOW IS COUNCIL ENGAGING?

It is a requirement of IPART that any council making an application for a special variation undertake a program of communication and engagement with its community.

Council is currently engaging with our residents through a number of avenues including:

- Letterbox drops
- Newspaper ads
- Media releases
- Fact sheets
- Community newsletters
- SV 'One Stop Shop' online engagement tool
- Documentation on public exhibition

Council will also be holding three community drop in forums at:

- Dorrigo Community Hall on 23 January 2017 from 4 - 6pm
- Urunga Literary Hall on 24 January from 4pm – 6pm
- Bellingen Memorial Hall on 25 January 2017 from 4pm – 6pm

## HOW CAN I HAVE MY SAY?

### Public Exhibition

Council's key financial, community and operational documents are on public exhibition from 15 December 2017 until 26 January 2018. Submissions regarding these documents can be made by emailing council at [council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au) or by hard copy to Council's administration building at 33-39 Hyde Street, Bellingen.

### Drop in Sessions

Residents and ratepayers are invited to attend a drop in session to speak directly with Council staff regarding the special variation. Drop in sessions will be held in the following locations:

- Dorrigo Public Hall, Hickory Street Dorrigo - 23 January 2018
- Urunga Literary Hall, Bowra Street Urunga - 24 January 2018
- Bellingen Memorial Hall, Hyde Street Bellingen - 25 January 2018

Drop in sessions will take place from 4pm to 6pm.

**Ratepayers are encouraged to bring along their annual rates notice to see what the special variation means to you.**

### 'Create' Bellingen

You can also have your say on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>. Simply register to participate.

### Digital Kiosk

In order to find out what the special variation means to you, Council will be providing a digital kiosk that will provide the opportunity for ratepayers to see how much their rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the three years via a rates calculator. The targeted bridge and roads program will also be available through interactive maps, priority roads and bridges lists that will be targeted as part of the additional funding generated from the special variation.

The rate calculator and interactive map info is available on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>.

The digital kiosk will be available at each of the drop in sessions.

### SV One Stop Shop - 'Create' Bellingen website

The SV Information Centre has again been set up to provide ratepayers with more information. The Information Centre provides you with:

- Factsheets
- Bridge and road maps
- Road renewal information including specific streets identified as a priority
- Publically exhibited documents
- Links to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)
- Other information relating to the proposed special variation.



## AS A PENSIONER, AM I ELIGIBLE FOR A CONCESSION / REBATE ON MY RATES?

Concessions are available for eligible pensioners. To be an eligible pensioner you must receive a pension from either Centrelink or the Department of Veterans' Affairs, and be entitled to a pensioner concession card issued by the Commonwealth Government. You can only claim a concession on the property if it is the sole or principal place you live.

If eligible, pensioners are entitled to up to half of the total of your ordinary rates and domestic waste management service charge, up to a maximum of \$250. In addition to this, pensioners are also entitled to up to half of their water rates or charges, up to a maximum of \$87.50 and up to half of their sewerage rates or charges, up to a maximum of \$87.50.

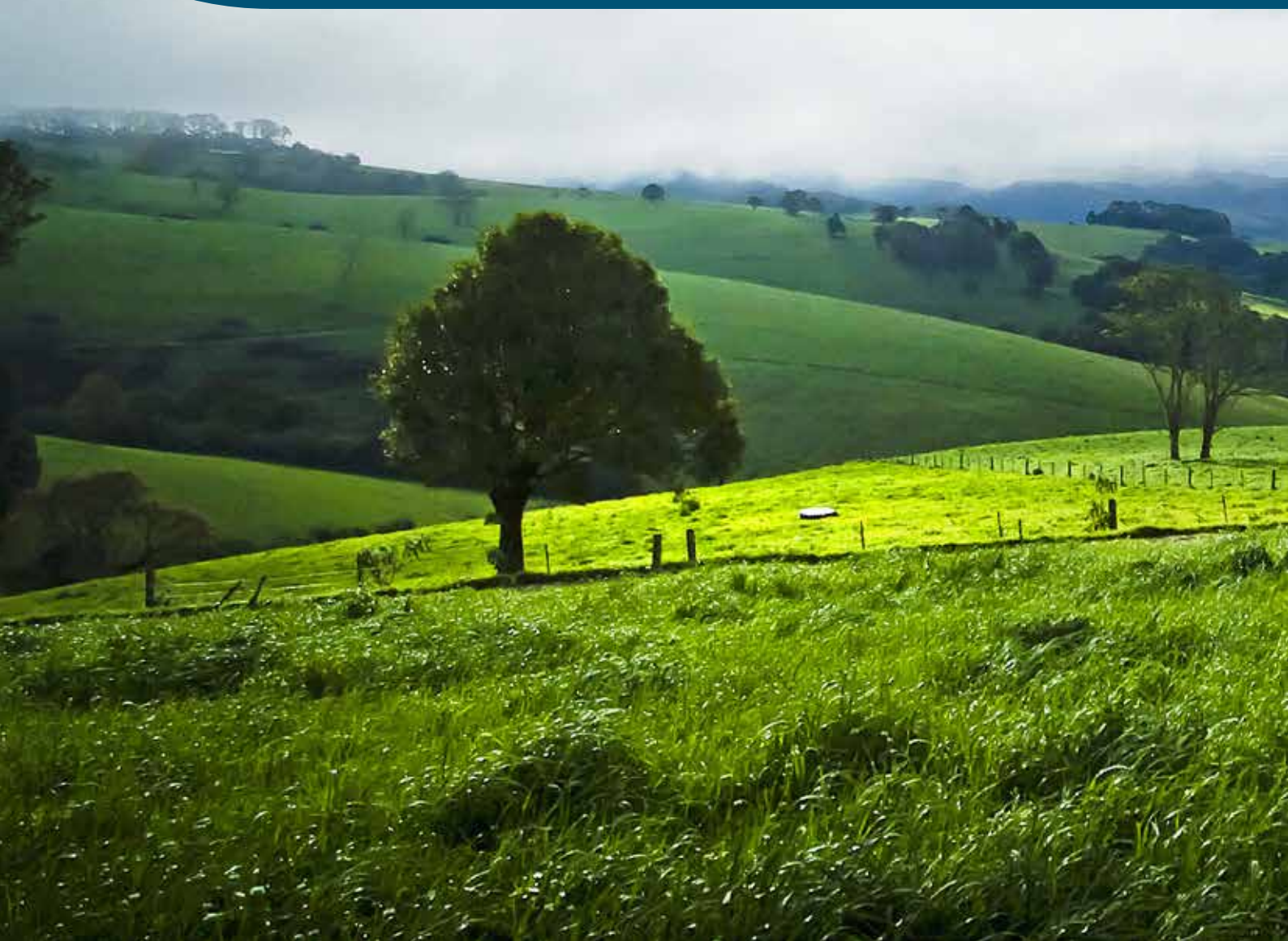
## HOW DO YOU APPLY FOR A PENSIONER CONCESSION?

You need to complete a pensioner concession application form. You can obtain these forms from Council.

## WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MY RATES?

Bellingen Council recognises that ratepayers may at times experience difficulty in paying rates and charges. Council has a Hardship Policy in place to provide assistance to ratepayers who are experiencing genuine difficulties with the payment of their rates and charges.

The Hardship Policy requires ratepayers to be means tested and make an application for a formal payment arrangement. Once the payment arrangement has been finalised, Council may also remove any interest accrued should this contribute to any additional hardship.





## Additional Community FAQs

The following additional information is provided to assist the community based on submissions and comments received to date.

### General Overview of Council

- Custodian for \$0.5 billion asset base
- 149 approved staff positions
- 2017/18 budget (in thousands)
  - Income - \$31,870
  - Expenditure - \$28,943
- FTE per 1000 residents 9.5 – NSW is 9.3
- Remuneration as a % of operating expenses 35% less than the State average of 38%

### 1. IPART set the rate peg and Council should stick to it

Unfortunately the Local Government Cost Index that IPART uses to work out the rate peg does not take into account councils' true costs.

- For example, local government's biggest cost is employee benefits and on-costs. IPART look at the Public Sector NSW Wage Price Index which, for 2015/16 rose by 1.9% and NOT the Local Government Award that councils are required to pay staff under which for the same period rose by 2.8%.
- IPART uses CPI for things like electricity which also doesn't take into account the service charges which have seen increases between 18% - 33%
- IPART does not consider depreciation or loan borrowings as well as the Community Strategic Plan which councils have a legislative requirement to prepare and implement
- The Local Government Cost Index that IPART uses to develop the rate peg also does not take into account the funding needed to address the infrastructure backlog or future service requirements
- IPART are basing the index expenditure weightings on a survey conducted in 2010 as opposed to current figures

### 2. Financial Assistance Grants not used for fixing the roads

This is completely false!

Council receives approximately \$850K per year for the roads component of the Federal Financial Assistance Grant and every dollar is spent on transport infrastructure. In 2016/17, Council spent well over \$5M renewing and maintaining road and bridge infrastructure. Council also spent more than \$3.3M in 2015/16.

In 2010-11, Council spent \$2.6M on its infrastructure of which only \$0.742M was the FAG component. This refutes any statements made regarding money spent from the FAG roads component on the Raleigh Depot.

On average, the FAGs road component makes up 31% of the annual road and bridge maintenance budget.

The maintenance investment on roads and bridges has increase by approximately 5% per annum since 2010-11.

The Financial Assistance Grant comprises of a General component and a Roads component. The Road component is calculated on the Council's road length.

While there is no legislated requirement for these funds to be spent on roads, Council's road maintenance expenditure is significantly higher than the Road Component of the FAG Grant

Council's Long Term Financial Plan sees an investment of \$50 million dollars on its roads and bridges infrastructure over the next 10 years!

### **3. Council has some of the highest rates in the State**

This is incorrect.

A comparison of rates across the State in 2015/2016 shows Bellingen Shire Council has one of the lowest rates in NSW. **Out of the 151 councils, Bellingen ranked 118th in the State** when looking at the average rate (total ordinary rates divided by the number of assessments in each shire). A ranking of 1 refers to the highest rates. This means the Bellingen Shire is in the lowest 25% for rates.

### **4. Overspend of rate payer money on Town Beautification Project**

This is incorrect. The Bellingen Town Beautification Project was not funded by 'rate payer' dollars. The project was fully funded through Roads to Recovery and Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) grants as well as Section 94 funds.

### **5. Council has not done enough to save money/cut costs**

As outlined in the community brochure and FAQ documents available on the Create site, Council has been implementing a number of cost saving initiatives and efficiencies that has helped contribute to a massive reduction in Council's operating result. This is evidenced in Council's audited financial statements that show a reduction in its financial deficit of \$9 million in 2014 to a surplus of \$0.28 million in 2017. This is a net improvement of \$9.3 million over the last 3 years.

More information can be found in Council's Financial Statement Summary which can be found on the Create website.

### **Savings/Efficiencies Achieved to Date**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Saving/Efficiency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Review of Print Services	\$50,000 annual reduction	Reduction in printing costs due to new contracts, education and awareness initiatives across the organisation.
Workers Compensation	\$202,000	Reduction due to a number of educational

Insurance	reduction over past 3 years	and awareness initiatives across the organisation to reduce 'lost time injury' and lower insurance premiums. Council has seen a 43% reduction in workers compensation claims since 1st July 2010.
Electricity and Heating Costs	\$255,000 reduction over past 3 years	Reduction due to negotiating new contracts along with a number of energy efficiency initiatives including solar installations, lighting replacements and in-house educational programs.
Leave Liability Reduction	\$309,000 reduction over past 2 years	Leave Liability Reduction initiative resulting in an 10% reduction.
Shared Learning Management System	\$45,000 over 4 years	Joint procurement of a shared learning management system involving 6 councils across the MIDROC group resulted in significant savings.
Recruitment Costs	\$40,000 per year	Implementation of an online careers site to manage Council's recruitment has resulted in significant savings for Council.
Review of banking services	\$21,000 per year	Due to renegotiation of new banking contract savings are to be realised from 2017/18 year onwards.
Electronic Communication Channels	\$10,000 + per year	Council implemented electronic rate notifications with the objective of improving productivity and customer service. To date this has realised a 13% take up rate.
Organisational Reviews	\$100,000's of savings	A number of organisational reviews undertaken resulting in multiple staffing efficiencies and a reduction in staffing levels (FTE's).
Other Efficiencies	\$100,000 + of ongoing savings	Multiple other savings achieved by creating a culture of efficiency that actively rewards innovation and savings. Including but not limited to reductions in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training</li> <li>• travel</li> <li>• internal audit</li> <li>• tender evaluation expenses</li> <li>• stores operations savings</li> <li>• IT efficiencies</li> <li>• Procurement</li> <li>• PPE controls and other efficiencies</li> </ul>

#### **Estimated Future Savings/Efficiencies**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Forecast Saving/Efficiency</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Electricity and Heating Costs	\$103,000 per	Further savings forecast due to the

	year	installation of further solar panels to all large sights in 2017/18.
Organisational Reviews	\$TBD	Further organisational reviews being undertaken to find further savings and efficiencies
Corporate IT Software	\$TBD	New IT software to be introduced in 2018. It is envisaged that there will be a number of savings/efficiencies realised through this process (process automation etc.)

## 6. High wages/too many staff – comparisons to other councils (Coffs City Council and Nambucca Shire Council)

### Staff Costs Specific Comments

- Staff costs equates to 34.84% of operating expenses
- Group 11 council average is 35.44%
- State average wage costs equate to 37.79%

### Other Comments

- Wages are directly linked to service provision. Council has a mix of services and/or number of services to meet community needs e.g. 3 libraries, 3 depots, 3 waste facilities, 2 pools.
- RMS contract works involve the employment of day labour staff etc. Coffs and Nambucca councils do not do RMS contract works.
- It is important to compare like with like i.e. size of the council, category of council, services provided, infrastructure provision, rate base etc
- Some council's may choose to use contractor staff in lieu of permanent employees. These costs may not appear as employee costs on council's financial statements. For example, Coffs Council employ a significant number of their staff through Coastal Works – the business arm of Coffs Council. This should be considered in any comparison.
- Comparatively Bellingen Shire Council manages almost 4 times the length of road per capita compared to Coffs City Council and is 20% higher than Nambucca Shire Council. **Specifically, and by way of comparison Bellingen maintains 40m, Nambucca 33m, and Coffs 11m per person.** This means more costs per person and therefore by rateable premises to maintain and renew Council's infrastructure compared to its neighbours.

### Rateable Land

- 57% of Bellingen Shire is non-rateable. This land is in the mainly comprised of State Forests/National Parks/Crown Land who use and rely on the provision of council infrastructure.
- If Council was able to rate across these government owned lands there would be improved opportunity to increase income while costs general stay the same. In turn this would lessen the rating burden for all.
- If Council was able to levy rates on even 50% of land that is government owned at the Farmland Rate (lowest rating category), it would raise approximately \$500,000 and remove the need for a special variation.

### Nambucca Council rateable parcels and land values versus Bellingen Council



- NSC has 9,269 rateable land parcels generating \$9.529M in rate revenue
- NSC land values total \$1.356B
- BSC has 6,038 rateable land parcels generating \$7.327M in rate revenue
- BSC land values total \$1.625B – on average Bellinghen has a higher land value than Nambucca

## 7. Average yearly land rates 2017/18 – comparisons across the Shire

2017/2018	# of	Land Value	Base Amt	Ad-Valorem	Average Rates	Average	
	Assessments					LV	% Income
Business	159	36,254,860	462.90	0.00279454	1,100.11	228,018	2.39%
Business-Bellinghen	103	27,250,410	462.90	0.00370851	1,444.05	264,567	2.03%
Business-Dorrigo	92	9,113,910	422.95	0.00510952	929.12	99,064	1.17%
Business-Urunga	56	19,514,920	462.90	0.00399608	1,855.46	348,481	1.42%
Farmland	397	297,414,815	462.90	0.00276741	2,536.12	749,156	13.75%
Residential	866	189,317,860	462.90	0.00256189	1,022.96	218,612	12.10%
Residential-Bellinghen	1,306	284,049,560	462.90	0.00252894	1,012.93	217,496	18.07%
Residential-Dorrigo	537	59,100,800	409.15	0.00377879	825.03	110,057	6.05%
Residential-Mylestom	177	49,482,000	462.90	0.00233859	1,116.67	279,559	2.70%
Residential - Rural	1237	440,339,460	462.90	0.00289171	1,492.27	355,974	25.21%
Residential-Urunga	1108	212,176,500	462.90	0.00279752	998.61	191,495	15.11%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6,038</b>	<b>1,624,015,095</b>					<b>100.00%</b>

## Time of year regarding SRV engagement and public exhibition

The time frame has been established by the NSW Government not Council.

Applications for a Special Rate Variation close 12 February, 2018. In order for Council to consider feedback from the community as well as meet the IPART assessment criteria, consultation, feedback and engagement needs to occur during this period.

## 8. What has Council done to improve its infrastructure?

- All 85 timber bridges have undergone a full condition and structural assessment
- Timber bridge replacement program has seen the following bridges upgraded:
  - New two land bridge over Reids Creek in Kalang - \$528,600
  - McFadyens Bridge renewed - \$1,100,000
  - Cooks Creek Bridge renewed - \$1,063,750
- Road renewals – 2.5kms of road rehabilitation and pavement renewal works - \$1,137,562
- Unsealed roads – gravel resheeting of 20 local roads (26kms) - \$442,707
- Grading of 31 local gravel roads (35kms) - \$376,846
- Resurfacing of 41km of condition 5 seals now complete

## 9. Pensioner Consideration.

- Normal pensioner rebates will apply a maximum \$250 discount for general rates. Additional rebates may also apply for water and sewer up to \$87.50 for each applicable service.
- Pensioners that claim a concession makes up approx. 24% of the Shire

## 10. 7 Years of variations

Council outlined seven (7) years of rate increases in its Fit for the Future resubmission.

Last year Council did a lot of work around cost reductions and efficiencies, as well as improved planning and assessments around its infrastructure. This resulted in Council being able to refine its projections, particularly about its infrastructure requirements, reducing the 7 years of special variations originally proposed to 4 years. This includes the SV approved for 2017/18 and additional 3 years proposed from 2018/19 – 2020/21.

As part of its feedback after last year's application, IPART also recommended that Council apply for a 3 year special variation.

## 11. Comparative to Coffs Harbour City Council

The following comparison with Coffs Harbour is provided by way of comparison. This indicates that even with the 3 year SV, the average general rate applied by Bellingen Shire Council would be lower than the current Coffs Harbour City Council projections.

### Model 1: Current Services Maintained

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27
<b>Rates</b>										
<b>Bellingen</b>										
Average Rates	\$ 1,214.40	\$ 1,287.26	\$ 1,364.50	\$ 1,446.37	\$ 1,482.53	\$ 1,519.59	\$ 1,557.58	\$ 1,596.52	\$ 1,636.43	\$ 1,677.35
Percentage Increase	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	6.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
\$ Increase per year		\$ 72.86	\$ 77.24	\$ 81.87	\$ 36.16	\$ 37.06	\$ 37.99	\$ 38.94	\$ 39.91	\$ 40.91
\$ Increase per week		\$ 1.40	\$ 1.49	\$ 1.57	\$ 0.70	\$ 0.71	\$ 0.73	\$ 0.75	\$ 0.77	\$ 0.79
<b>Coffs Harbour</b>										
Average Rates	\$ 1,424.77	\$ 1,460.39	\$ 1,496.90	\$ 1,534.32	\$ 1,572.68	\$ 1,612.00	\$ 1,652.30	\$ 1,693.60	\$ 1,735.94	\$ 1,779.34
Percentage Increase	7.75%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
\$ Increase per year		\$ 35.62	\$ 36.51	\$ 37.42	\$ 38.36	\$ 39.32	\$ 40.30	\$ 41.31	\$ 42.34	\$ 43.40
\$ Increase per week		\$ 0.68	\$ 0.70	\$ 0.72	\$ 0.74	\$ 0.76	\$ 0.77	\$ 0.79	\$ 0.81	\$ 0.83

## 12. IPART previously approved SRV's for local government across NSW.

- 129 Applications received by IPART over past 7 years.
- 98% of applications approved either in part (18%) or full (80%)
- Only 6 applications have been rejected outright

**The BIGGEST TOP 10 “headline” SRV’s GRANTED during IPART’s SRV role include:**

✓	Parkes Shire Council	52.00% (over 4 yrs)	(13/14)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Maitland City Council	50.75% (over 7 yrs)	(14/15)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	North Sydney Council	48.91% (over 6 yrs)	(12/13)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Lake Macquarie City	47.09% (over 7 yrs)	(12/13)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Tenterfield Shire Council	45.00% (over 4 yrs)	(14/15)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Wollondilly Shire	43.20% (over 4 yrs)	(15/16)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Waverley Council	40.50% (over 3 yrs)	(11/12)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Newcastle City Council	40.00% (over 5 yrs)	(15/16)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Gloucester Shire Council	39.00% (over 3 yrs)	(15/16)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>
✓	Wingecaribee Shire Council	39.02% (over 4 yrs)	(16/17)	<a href="#">[determination]</a>

**13. What SRV’s has Council applied for in the past?**

**Council has only applied for 4 SVs in 20 years.**

- 1997/1998 - 5% SRV for roads
- 2004/2005 - 4% Environmental Levy
- 2014/2015 – 9.3% SRV for infrastructure
- 2017/18 – 4.5% for road renewals

**14. Where can residents get more information?**

Go to Council’s Create website, email Council directly, contact your local councillor, or call into the Council offices in Bellingen.

**15. How can residents have their say?**

- Make a submission
- ‘Have your Say’ via the Council’s Create website
- Call into Council in Bellingen and speak to staff
- Call Council on 6655 7300
- Write a letter to Council and submit by mail or website

**All submissions must be received by 26 January 2018.**



# HOW WILL A SPECIAL VARIATION AFFECT MY RATES?

The proposed special variation to address our community’s transport infrastructure, e.g., our roads and bridges is estimated to have the following impact on the rating categories:

Annual Rate Increase (%)	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Cumulative
Rate Peg (Estimate)	2.3%	2.5%	2.5%	
Special Variation	3.7%	3.5%	3.5%	
TOTAL ANNUAL INCREASE	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	19.1%

For Residential Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,078.59	\$1,143.30	\$1,211.90	\$1,284.62	-
Annual Increase		\$64.72	\$68.60	\$72.71	\$68.68
Weekly Increase		\$1.24	\$1.32	\$1.40	\$1.32

For Business Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$1,341.20	\$1,421.67	\$1,506.97	\$1,597.39	-
Annual Increase		\$80.47	\$85.30	\$90.42	\$85.40
Weekly Increase		\$1.55	\$1.64	\$1.74	\$1.64

For Farmland Ratepayers

Average Rate (Incl. Rate Peg)	Current	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Av. Increase
Annual Rate	\$2,520.26	\$2,671.48	\$2,831.76	\$3,001.67	-
Annual Increase		\$151.22	\$160.29	\$169.91	\$160.47
Weekly Increase		\$2.91	\$3.08	\$3.27	\$3.09

\*The above rates are estimates only based on rate category averages. Your final rate amount will be dependent on your land value and the final rates model adopted by Council in June 2018.

## Rates Calculator

In order to find out what the special variation means to you, Council has designed a rate calculator that will provide information on how much your rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the three years. The rate calculator is available on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>. The rates calculator will also be available on our digital kiosk at each of the drop in sessions.

# HOW CAN YOU HAVE YOUR SAY?

## Public Exhibition

Council’s key financial, community and operational documents are on public exhibition from 14 December 2017 until 26 January 2018. Submissions regarding these documents can be made by emailing council at [council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@bellingen.nsw.gov.au) or by hard copy to Council’s administration building at 33-39 Hyde Street, Bellingen.

## Drop in Sessions

Residents and ratepayers are invited to attend a drop in session to speak directly with Council staff regarding the special variation. Drop in sessions will be held in the following locations:

- Dorrigo Public Hall, Hickory Street   
Dorrigo   
- 23 January 2018
- Urunga Literary Hall, Bowra Street   
Urunga   
- 24 January 2018
- Bellingen Memorial Hall, Hyde Street   
Bellingen   
- 25 January 2018

Drop in sessions will take place from 4pm to 6pm. Ratepayers are encouraged to bring along their rates notice to see what the special variation means to you.

## ‘Create’ Bellingen

You can also have your say on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>. Simply register to participate.

## Digital Kiosk

In order to find out what the special variation means to you, Council will be providing a digital kiosk that will provide the opportunity for ratepayers to see how much their rates are likely to increase per week and per year for the three years via a rates calculator. The targeted bridge and roads program will also be available through interactive maps, priority roads and bridges lists that will be targeted as part of the additional funding generated from the special variation.

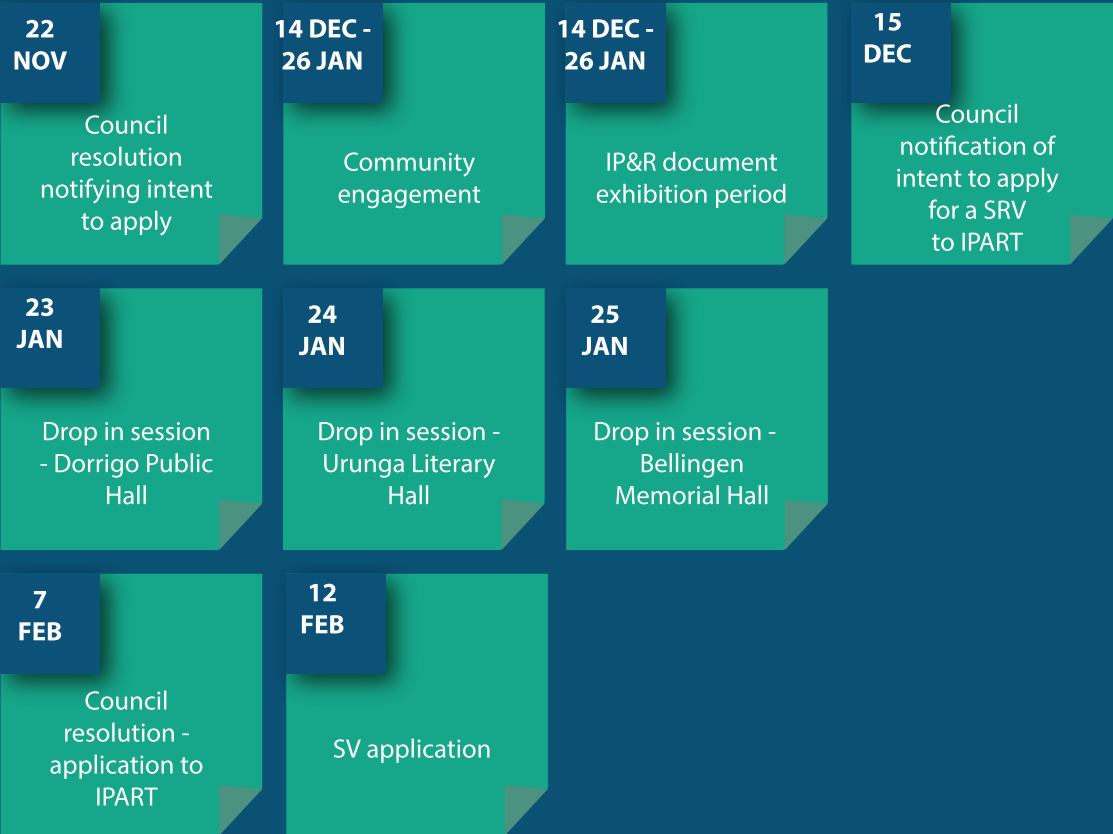
The rate calculator and interactive map info is available on the Create Bellingen website at <http://create.bellingen.nsw.gov.au/>.

The digital kiosk will be available at each of the drop in sessions.

Ratepayers are encouraged to bring along their rates notification to see what the special variation means to you.

## SV One Stop Shop - ‘Create’

The SV Information Centre has again been set up to provide ratepayers with more information. The Information Centre provides you with factsheets, maps, road renewal information including specific streets identified as a priority, publicly exhibited documents, links to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and other information relating to the proposed special variation.



# Special Rate Variation SECURING OUR FUTURE THROUGH IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE

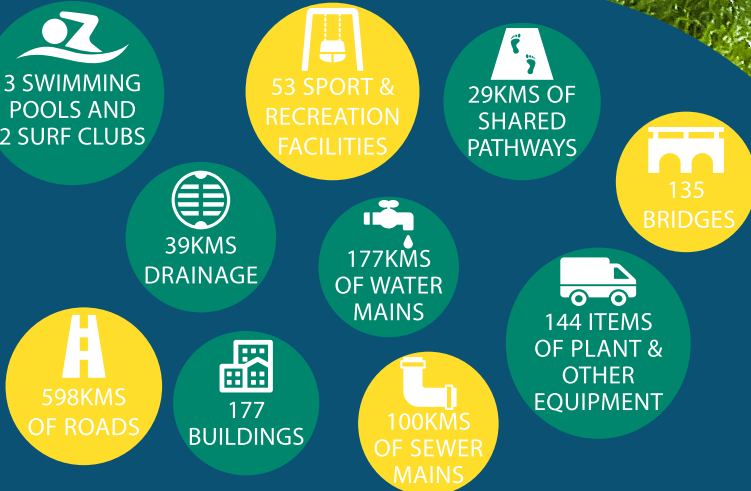
Council has a 10 year plan for the Bellingen Shire to ensure our infrastructure is secure over the long term providing quality services to our community. In order for Council to achieve this, we need to live within our means while balancing the delivery of the best possible services.

Like many other NSW councils, our community assets like roads and bridges are aging and need to be upgraded. We know that our community places a high value on these assets, in particular our road and bridge network. Our assets in their current state are continually deteriorating and need significant investment. To improve our public assets we need to spend more money on renewing and upgrading them to ensure they meet the future needs of our community.

While we understand a rate rise is never welcome, we believe it is an important conversation we need to have with our community. We are seeking your feedback on a proposal to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a special variation. We encourage you to read through this important information to understand why we are asking you to consider this proposal.

# DID YOU KNOW?

Bellingen Shire Council is responsible for over \$0.5 billion worth of assets! Are you aware that Council delivers over 50 unique services to our community. Some of these include libraries, community halls, waste facilities, playgrounds, swimming pools, public amenities, museums and youth facilities. Council’s major assets include:





# WHY IS A SPECIAL VARIATION PROPOSED?

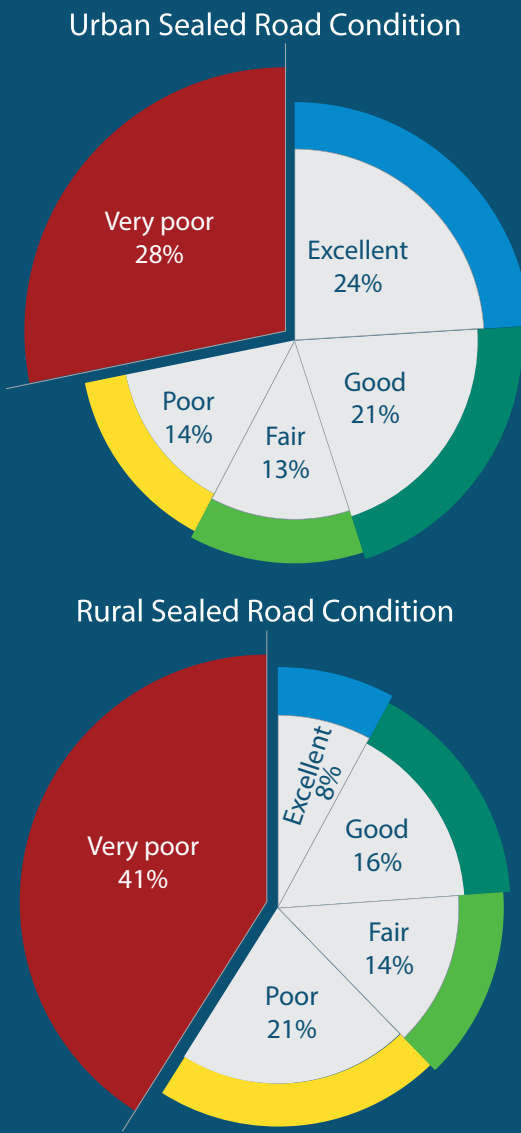
Our community has consistently told us that assets like roads and bridges are most important to them and we need to improve their condition. In 2014, the NSW State Government initiated its Fit for the Future local government reform program that required all NSW councils to submit a proposal demonstrating plans to achieve long term financial sustainability, better manage our assets and become more efficient in the way we deliver services.

In response to this, Council has undertaken a significant planning process and has identified the need for a 6% rate rise per year for 3 years (19.1% cumulative increase). The planning process has identified roads and bridges as the key priority that we need to address. Condition assessments were undertaken on our roads and bridges indicating 109kms of rural and 29kms of urban roads were in urgent need of resealing. It also indicated that 22 bridges needed to be load limited with another 48 in poor condition. While work has commenced to address these issues, more work needs to be done including an additional allocation of funding.

# WHAT IS A SPECIAL VARIATION?

A special variation allows a council to increase its general income above the rate peg, under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW). Special variations can be for one or several years, and can be temporary or permanently retained in the rates base.

Each year, councils wishing to apply for a special variation apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in February. The applications are assessed against criteria listed in the Office of Local Government's Guidelines. These include undertaking long term financial planning, ensuring community awareness of the need and extent of the proposed increase in rates, and consideration of the impact on ratepayers and the community's capacity and willingness to pay. In addition, councils must meet criteria related to productivity improvements. For more information on special variations, refer to IPART's website at <https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/For-Ratepayers/Special-Variations>.



# WHERE WILL THE EXTRA INCOME BE SPENT?

Council is proposing a 3 year 6% special variation to improve or renew our community's transport infrastructure, e.g., our roads and bridges. The additional income generated as part of the special variation will target our priority roads in need of urgent resealing repairs along with those bridges currently under load limits and further identified as needing rehabilitation or replacement.

Council's current Long Term Financial Plan, without a proposed special variation, does not allow us to maintain and renew assets as fast as they are deteriorating. The special variation will allow urgent works to be undertaken bringing our transport infrastructure program of works forward.

## BITUMEN RESURFACING

SV will allow Council to reseal our entire sealed road network every 15 years (Approx. 400kms). Very poor condition roads to be targeted in the first 5 years.

## BRIDGE RENEWAL PROGRAM

A minimum of \$379K to be allocated to the bridge renewal program from 2020 onwards. SV will allow us to renew approximately 1 bridge per year.

# WHAT HAS COUNCIL DONE TO BE MORE EFFICIENT?

The consideration of a special variation is only one of a number of options Council has considered in order to improve our overall financial performance and better manage and maintain infrastructure. These are some of the initiatives Council has undertaken in recent years to assist in becoming more efficient:

- ✓ Human resourcing savings (workers compensation, learning/development savings, leave liability reductions etc.)
- ✓ Organisational Reviews (implemented more efficient ways of doing business)
- ✓ Saving from contract negotiations (Banking services, print services, regional procurement etc.)
- ✓ Energy Efficiency Initiatives (Solar and other green initiatives etc.)
- ✓ Transitioning from paper to electronic communication channels
- ✓ Increased income from sourcing additional income streams (RMS State road works, private works)
- ✓ Successfully sourcing additional grant revenue
- ✓ Implementing best practice maintenance management system for infrastructure maintenance

# WHAT HAS COUNCIL DONE TO IMPROVE ITS INFRASTRUCTURE?

Over the last few years, Council has made significant improvements to our assets in particular our road and bridge infrastructure. These works have been funded by a number of sources including Council's revenue, State and federal grants and a special variation. Some of these improvements/achievements include:



## UNSEALED ROADS

Gravel resheeting of 20 local roads approximately 26km in length, total expenditure \$442,707  
Formation renewal grading of 31 local gravel roads approximately 35km in length, total expenditure \$376,846

## RESURFACING WORKS 2016-17

Whiskey Creek Road, Dorriggo	2.20km
Summervilles Road, Thora	2.49km
Promised Land Road, Gleniffer	1.89km
Timboon Road, Gleniffer end	0.63km
Roses Road, Gleniffer	1.60km
Gleniffer Road, Gleniffer	1.67km
Hydes Creek Road, Bellingen	1.29km
Bowraville Road, Brierfield	5.01km
Valery Road, Valery	1.64km
Mylestom Drive, Mylestom	3.60km
North Bank Road, Bellingen	1.24km
Hungry Head Road	2.70km
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25.96KM</b>



## RENEWALS

2.5km of road rehabilitation and pavement renewal works, total expenditure \$1,137,562

## SHIRE ROAD RENEWAL 2016-17

North Bank Road	0.34km
Yellow Rock Road	0.60km
Bellingen Street	0.50km
Hickory Street	0.41km
South Arm Road	0.65km
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.5KM</b>



## TIMBER BRIDGE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

All 90 local timber bridges have undergone a full condition and structural assessment. In 2016/17, the total expenditure was \$270,000. These works provide the necessary data to prioritise Council's bridge renewal program and provides the data to apply for much needed grant funding.

## TIMBER BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

A new two lane concrete bridge was constructed over Reids Creek on Kalang Road, total expenditure \$528,630.

McFaydens Bridge renewal - \$1,100,000.  
Cooks Creek Bridge renewal - \$1,063,750.