



Armidale Regional Council Proposed SRV 2023-2036 Community Engagement Summary Report

**November
2022**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Armidale Regional Council (ARC) is committed to delivering their vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. It's a promise for how ARC will plan, advocate, deliver and celebrate everything that is needed to support and grow the Armidale Region into the future.

However over the past 25 years Council has drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low land rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure. The 2022-2023 general budget (excluding waste, as well as water supply and sewer funds) forecasts income of \$50.7M and expenses of \$56.6M, a deficit of \$5.9M (12% of income).

The concern with this deficit is that once Council pays its cash operating expenses (employees, materials and services) there is only \$8.6M left to invest in infrastructure assets, far less than the \$14.5M of depreciation expenses in the budget (depreciation reflects the long term investment needed to renew assets).

The focus of this report is the community engagement undertaken by ARC and supported by Centium to provide information about a Special Variation proposal and to enable the community to understand and respond. While ARC commenced the community engagement process during the IP&R exhibition period and leading to the adoption of the budget in June 2022, this report will present in detail the feedback provided by the community during August and September. The activities conducted during the community engagement period are outlined in **Part One** of this report, and

Attachment One also includes copies of the materials distributed throughout this period. The consultation focused on obtaining feedback on two options:

1. **Managed Decline** - where operational services are cut to free up funds for renewal of ageing infrastructure assets (but the state of local assets will continue to worsen as ARC still won't have sufficient funds to keep up with renewal needs), or
2. **Special Rate Variation** - SRV is part of the solution to restore the real cost of maintaining assets and providing services to grow and be sustainable.

While the community expressed understandable concern regarding the proposal to pay additional rates, there was also a sizable portion of the community who supported the new Council and its vision for growing the Armidale Region and addressing the financial sustainability of the Council. A detailed breakdown of community feedback is provided in **Part Two**, and all the submissions are also included in **Attachment Two** in redacted format.



PART ONE – METHODOLOGY

IP&R PUBLIC EXHIBITION - MARCH TO JUNE

Immediately after the newly elected Council commenced in December 2021, Council began working to shape future directions through the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework. Council deliberated a number of scenarios when considering how to adequately address financial sustainability while also working toward achieving the community's aspirations in the Advancing our Region Community Plan. In the end, Council agreed that a Special Rate Variation was required, and developed its draft IP&R documents on this premise.

Council was proactive and transparent in its approach to community engagement during the IP&R public exhibition process. While the Draft Community Plan, Draft Delivery Program, and Draft 2022-2023 Operational Plan and Budget were on public exhibition in June 2022, Council utilised the opportunity to begin a conversation with the community about the need for an SRV.

Council held public meetings in both Guyra and Armidale, outlining to the community (some 120 participants) the rationale behind the proposed 50% SRV as part of a turnaround strategy for the Council. Council also provided detailed responses to each of the approximately 60 formal public submissions. The public was also informed that further consultation about the proposed SRV would be forthcoming.

In June 2022 Armidale Regional Council adopted a budget which included a proposal to gauge community opinions on a Special Rate Variation. Council resolved to seek further community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent SRV of around 50% to be phased in over three years (2024-6), which would result in a cumulative 58.81% SRV including the rate peg (assumed to be 2.5% p.a.). The SRV would take effect from 2023-24.

SCALE AND REACH – AUGUST TO SEPTEMBER

In an effort to garner the broadest possible range of feedback from communities within the LGA, Armidale Regional Council developed several methods for community and stakeholder engagement surrounding the proposed Special Rate Variation. These included:

1. Reference panels – community and business
2. Community meetings
3. Targeted stakeholder meetings
4. Community survey

These varied approaches provided a range of forums for community and stakeholder participation in engagement processes. The benefits of this engagement structure included:

- Demonstrated acknowledgement by Council, that community members and stakeholders have varying needs, limitations and preferences in participating in community issues and discussions
- The communication and engagement approaches used for this process provided varied formats for discussion and feedback. This variation enabled

discussion and exploration of issues at different levels and solicited a broad range of questions, comments and ideas from participants.

- The application of several distinct engagement methodologies enabled cross-validation of community feedback received from each approach.

What we did	Scale and Reach
Modes of Communication	
Rates instalment newsletter: project outline – July 2022	All ratepayers
Advertising campaign – August through September <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio advertising (2AD and 100.3) • Newspaper advertising – Guyra Gazette and Armidale Express 	All local radio and newspaper consumers
Social posts – Facebook and Instagram	Up to 1,758 views of social posts
Media release – August 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2AD radio interview 8th September • 2ARMFM interview 9th September 	All radio listeners
Letter mailed to all ratepayers – 5th September 2022	All ratepayers
Methods of Engagement	
Project page on ‘Your Say Armidale’ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information pack and rate myths sheet • ‘What will I pay?’ info sheet • Public meeting dates • Survey and comments forum 	Open for six weeks 2,300 visitors 637 downloads 362 surveys 46 forum comments
Staff briefings 16th August <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armidale Town Hall • Guyra depot 	All staff invited to attend
Community and Business Panel meetings: 6 x 2.5 hours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25th August • 30th August • 6th September 	Around 25 people attended panel meetings (see below for detailed methodology)
Public meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 13th September – Armidale Town Hall • 14th September – Guyra Bowling Club • 15th September – Wollomombi Community Hall 	Approximately 250 people attended public meetings

What we did	Scale and Reach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21st September – online 	
<p>Stakeholder meetings – invited from Guyra Progress Association, key pillar working groups, NSW Farmers, Ratepayers Association, Indigenous Advisory Committee, Access Committee, Arts and Culture Committee, Chambers of Commerce, and the Safety and Crime Prevention Interagency groups and Rotary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13th September – Community leaders 13th September – Armidale Ratepayers and Residents Association 	Approximately 25 people attended the two stakeholder meetings
Call for written submissions closing by 30th September	102 submissions were received by email and by post, and are included in Attachment Two

ADDRESSING IPART ENGAGEMENT CRITERIA

The purpose of the community engagement was to test community perceptions and opinions on the proposed special rate variation prior to Council deciding whether to apply to IPART in February 2023.

The methodology aimed to provide information to the community to explain the rationale and to ensure that all people who were interested or affected had access to good information and were able to have their say:

IPART criterion to assess whether consultation is effective:	ARC methods used
Clearly communicating the full impact of the proposed rate increases to ratepayers	The Mayor, GM and Directors provided a one-hour presentation at all briefings and meetings. An information pack, rate increase tables and fact sheet were loaded onto the project website. A letter was sent to all ratepayers with details of the website and meetings.
Clearly articulated whether the SRV will result in either a temporary or permanent increase in Council's total income	The word 'permanent' was used to describe the proposed SRV in all communications. The panel meetings provided a small group setting for participants to take their time to understand the proposal. The public meetings allowed for one hour of question and answers, including to understand the intricacies of the proposal and the rating system.
Clearly communicated what the SRV would fund	This was described at a high level for the purpose of asset maintenance and renewal, and the breakdown into asset classes and service levels within each asset

IPART criterion to assess whether consultation is effective:	ARC methods used
	class was provided in the meeting presentations and in the information pack.
Used an appropriate variety of engagement methods to ensure community awareness and input into the SRV process	Overall the Council used radio and print advertising, social media, project website, letter to all ratepayers, targeted stakeholder communications, public meetings and an online forum to ensure community awareness and input.
Made the community aware of the need for and extent of the rate rise	The information pack and meeting presentations described the overall financial picture, and provided a clear link between the SRV and achieving the vision for regional growth for the newly elected Council.

REFERENCE PANELS

In late August and early September two reference panels were established – one for business representatives and one for community members. Panel membership was designed to represent a cross-section of the communities and the business sector of Armidale region. Representatives from local communities were invited to participate, with a target of 20 members for each panel.

For the Community Reference Panel, a cross section of community members was identified and invited to participate based on characteristics such as age, gender, and cultural background with specific intent for the inclusion of community members representing demographic groups such as young and elderly people, people with disability, Aboriginal people and young parents.

Similarly, for the Business Reference Panel, 20 participants were identified and invited based on their involvement in local business enterprises and activities of varying sizes and from different areas of industry. These included agriculture, retail, professional services manufacturing/construction.

Each panel met on three occasions. To reflect the regional nature communities involved and the various population centres located in the LGA, two meetings of each panel were held in Armidale and one of each was held in Guyra. Each meeting was run over 2.5 hours and were led by a moderator. Council's Executive Team attended all meetings, along with the Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor. All meetings were designed to enable deep discussion and exploration of the main issues surrounding the proposed SRV and included ample time for Q&A and discussion.

Attendance of meetings by participants varied depending on their availability on the nominated meeting dates. Participant attendance at all six meetings totaled 67 people. This included a total of 45 participants at the Community Reference Panel meetings and 22 participants at the Business Reference Panel meetings.

PART TWO – WHAT PEOPLE SAID

COMMON QUESTIONS

The public meeting series included a one-hour briefing delivered by the Mayor, the General Manager and three Directors. The participants were then invited to ask questions, and speakers addressed their questions for up to another hour and a half. The following provides a sample of some typical questions and answers from the meetings:

Q. Is this over three years, or is it permanent?

A. It is introduced over three years, but then the increase becomes a permanent part of the rate base.

Q. With the rate increase, do people in rural areas pay more than in town?

A. We've prepared an information sheet to show how much more you will pay, but if you want to know the exact number please call us and we will tell you what the increase will be on your property. Rural ratepayers use community services such as sports fields and parks less, but their roads are more expensive to maintain per person.

Q. I am concerned that in three year's time you'll be back asking for another increase.

A. It would be a brave and silly Council to do that. That's why we asked for 50% which is our actual need, if we only get 30% that might be a reality. With the 50% over the cumulative period that gives us what we need to improve our services and deliver our infrastructure. We'll still have to continue to improve, but we won't have to apply for a further increase.

Q. What consideration has Council given to people on limited incomes? Why are you doing this now, when cost of living is skyrocketing? The pensioner rebates don't really do much, there are a lot of people doing it tough.

A. There's never a good time to do what we're doing, we should have done this about 25 years ago. Inflation is now up, not as bad as in other areas, but this also affects Council - our costs have risen too. There are some hardship policies in place, and people can negotiate payment plans. Some people in the community don't pay rates, due to their circumstances. We are hoping that the federal government are going to increase pensions.

Q. Is rate pegging on top of the SRV? We have high inflation so rate pegging might end up at 5% as well

A. If we're successful then we don't get the rate peg, while we're introducing the SRV. During the 3-year period we don't have a rate peg on top of that, after year four the rate peg will return.

Q. If this is successful, how will Council report on progress?

A. We will report this annually back to the community on the money we receive and the projects that we deliver. Every cent that we raise will be put into the infrastructure and services that so desperately need it.

Q. Why do we pay the highest rates in NSW?

A. I would encourage everyone to have a look at the myth buster sheet. There are 128 Councils in NSW, we are in a grouping of 28. We are the 7th lowest as a proportion of land value. Farmland is 5th highest, business rates are in the middle.

Q. I'm concerned that if rates go up, then it will deter people looking to move to Armidale. It will be a disincentive for people and businesses looking to relocate. People are hurting out of Covid, from the drought, from bushfires etc. We agree that infrastructure needs to be maintained, but there have been three SRVs in the past few years.

A. I don't think that people will be deterred from locating by increased rates, but we can see that there is hardship in the community. There are also other Councils that are increasing their rates too. We are coming to talk to you because we have to, not because we want to. We want to live here with better services.

Q. Do you have a contingency if the growth doesn't happen?

A. You can't have excellent services without more money in. One of the limiting factors is that we're not big enough, we miss out on significant funding because we're not growing fast enough. The region won't be what we want it to be.

Q. Is harmonisation going to affect the SRV, is it going to make our SRV higher than 50%?

A. There is a document on the website that will tell you what your rates are. If you're above the average land value then you pay more, if you're below the average then you'll pay less.

EXPENDITURE PRIORITIES

The online survey was a useful tool in testing people's appetite for the two options that were called 'Managed Decline' or 'Proposed SRV'. The information pack explained each of the options, so the following questions indicate the preferences of the 362 people who filled out the survey:

Q. Council has prepared an information pack to explain the issues and how they propose to address them. Have you downloaded and read the information pack included on the Your Say webpage?

	Yes	No
<i>Number</i>	309	52
<i>Percent</i>	86%	14%

Q. If Council needs to reduce its spending to ensure that local assets do not fall into disrepair, how supportive would you be of these options?

Respondents could select from four answers:

- Very supportive
- Supportive
- Somewhat supportive; or
- Not at all supportive.

The following table indicates the percentage of total respondents who selected 'very unsupportive':

% of Respondents who were very unsupportive ...		
Refusing state and federal government grants for new assets due to lack of matching funds or funds for ongoing maintenance	58%	<div>More strongly against</div> <div>↑</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Less strongly against</div>
Reduced mowing, maintenance, and toilet cleaning in parks	52%	
Reducing economic development	50%	
Closing some sporting fields and parks	49%	
Reducing hours at the libraries, swimming pools, customer service, counter and museum	43%	
Increasing fees for the preschool and other fee-paying services	40%	
Reduced activity in tourism marketing and events	39%	
Increasing commercial and community lease fees	34%	
Ceasing the community grants program	34%	
Decommissioning community buildings and facilities	33%	
Reducing speed limits on some roads due to worsening road condition	29%	
Disposing of property and public assets	29%	

Q8 Do you support additional funds from the SRV being made available for:

Respondents could select from four answers:

- Very supportive
- Supportive
- Somewhat supportive; or
- Not at all supportive.

The following table indicates the percentage of total respondents who selected 'very supportive' or 'supportive' or 'somewhat supportive':

% of Respondents who were supportive ...		
Maintaining public space and amenity	78%	<div>More supportive of extra funds</div> <div>↑</div> <div>↓</div> <div>Less supportive of extra funds</div>
Maintaining local playgrounds	76%	
Maintaining local assets	76%	
Maintaining local roads - sealed and unsealed	75%	
Maintaining parks and sporting fields	75%	
Maintaining community buildings	72%	
Economic development	71%	
Relining and upgrading our urban stormwater drainage system	68%	
Repairing timber bridges	68%	
Planning the growth of the area	67%	
Renewing existing a building new footpaths and cycleways	60%	

FOR AND AGAINST THE SRV

Q. Which option do you support overall?

Of the 362 people who completed the survey, the following tables indicated whether they were against or supportive of the SRV by locality and property type.

By Locality

	Against	Supportive	No Answer
1. Armidale	171	82	15
2. Armidale - rural areas	23	8	3
3. Guyra	19	3	1
4. Guyra - rural areas	6	1	
5. Ebor	3		
6. Hillgrove	2		
7. Wollomombi	3	1	
8. Ben Lomond	8		
9. Llangothlin			
10. Black Mountain	2	1	1
11. Wards Mistake			
12. Other	10	5	
Total (Number)	241	101	20
Total (Percentage)	66%	28%	6%

By Property Type

	Against	Supportive	No Answer
1. Residential	191	89	16
2. Residential (Non-Urban/Village)	17	5	2
3. Farmland	27	6	2
4. Business	6	1	-
Total (Number)	241	101	20
Total (Percentage)	66%	28%	6%

COMMON THEMES

There were some common themes in the community feedback, and the following section provides quotes from the submissions, survey and online forum as grouped into the following themes:

Arguments against the SRV	Reasons to support the SRV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of trust in Council due to historic governance failures Concern that the increases will be unaffordable at a time when other expenses are also rising Suggesting a smaller increase or a slower introduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the growth and development of the region Opposition to decline of public assets and amenity Trust in the new Council – elected and management officials

Arguments against the SRV	Reasons to support the SRV
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rates are already high in comparison with other LGAs 	

Historic governance failures

“The people of Armidale should not have to suffer from the mismanagement of previous councils, particularly in the current economic environment. I don't deny that it is a burden for the current councillors and management to find a way out of this mess... but you guys all put your hand up for the job, so if you're not up for it maybe it's time to step down and find someone who is.” *(Survey comment)*

“Council is not efficient now with its spending. Why would ratepayers provide more money to continue to be mis managed. Armidale continually refuses to measure and monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of its most costly asset: its staff. The community has no faith in Council's ability to spend money wisely due to a lack of accurate data on its operations. Why would people want to give Armidale Council such a hefty increase due to its own mismanagement and no explanation regarding how it will resolve this mismanagement.” *(Survey comment)*

“Ratepayers should not be made to pay for the hideous Council mistakes of the past! The amalgamation cost the communities of Guyra and Armidale financially and psychologically! The mismanagement of millions of dollar due to egos and nepotism of the past Administrator and grossly overpaid inexperienced senior executives- who are well gone from our communities.” *(Forum comment)*

Lack of affordability

“I think the 50% increase is too much. The rates are already a heavy amount to pay with the price of living increasing so much recently. We are on pension income and are concerned how we are going to afford to pay any increase.” *(Survey comment)*

“Given all the other cost of living increases, I think it is not reasonable to impose such a huge increase on those who are already struggling to make ends meet. You must look at the proposed increases in the light of those on very low, fixed incomes. Will you be happy just pushing them out the door and saying 'Sorry, we know it's tough for you, but too bad!'” *(Survey comment)*

“I am a 74 year old invalid pensioner living on my own with no friends, relatives or careers. I cannot afford the increase. I have already cut back on food, fuel, heating & medications. what else do you want me to give up?” *(Survey comment)*

“Businesses will suffer with the SRV. The rate rise will make some businesses unsustainable.” *(Panel comment)*

“Guyra residents will be hit very hard with the SRV and rates harmonisation – this may cause serious hardship for some people.” *(Panel comment)*

What about a third option?

“I do not in principle agree with managed decline in order to keep the rates low. However, I do not agree with the size of the proposed rate variation. Reducing some

of the ambitions somewhat may enable the council to get by with say a 30% special rate variation. I miss the opportunity, in this survey, to give my opinion on more than the proposed two options.” *(Survey comment)*

“Your paper presented only two options for us to consider. Is there a middle option whereby the rate increase is agreed but postponed for two years to enable us to, hopefully, get back on our feet post Covid-19 and the current inflationary period? Is there another option whereby the Special Rate Variation is reduced in size?” *(Submission comment)*

“Where is the middle ground option that combines a smaller SRV with council - councillors and management - committing to working harder and smarter to become sustainable in the long term - through efficiency gains, population growth, economic development and non-rate revenue sources?” *(Forum comment)*

High rates compared with other areas

“Our rates are already high - and higher than inner city Sydney (which is quite a shock). There must be something else that Council could do to ensure that their obligations towards the care and upkeep of our region are met.” *(Survey comment)*
“Armidale rates are presently very much higher than many other areas.” *(Survey comment)*

“The current residential rates are already well in excess of rates on the Central Coast. Over \$200 more per quarter. I do not support an increase in rates other than CPI.” *(Survey comment)*

Support for regional growth

“Something needs to be done to revitalise to town, we need to continue in encouraging more visitors to the area bringing in business and leaving a lasting impression. We need to be a location people want to live and grow businesses.” *(Survey comment)*

“I’d like to convey my support for the variation and my thanks to you for being brave and getting on with the job. In my opinion we cannot have quality infrastructure and services while the ARC remains in a poor financial situation. If the proposal is supported and passed, I look forward to your delivery of the economic and community dividends you expect” *(Submission comment)*

“We need to grow and prosper not decline. Why would anyone want to live in a city that is in Managed Decline???” *(Survey comment)*

Opposition to decline

“Affordable for me and managed decline will not encourage future population and economic growth which is what Armidale desperately needs. Too many decades now of stagnant population, rejecting new economic opportunities and relying on UNE & agriculture. Those economic drivers are now less relevant and too risky to rely on, time to move on.” *(Survey comment)*

"I'm writing to express my support of the land rates increase. I support it because I believe that council's maintenance of public facilities has been increasingly lacking over the past decade and if the new council are to make a difference then it will simply cost money. We all benefit from council being able to do its job." (*Submission comment*)

"Our council area and our local assets have been neglected for 20 years – this explains why we are where we are now. It sounds like if we don't do this now, we'll have nothing left to build on for our future." (*Panel comment*)

"We, the ratepayers, have little choice. If they are not given the extra funds via the SRV, services will deteriorate, roads will remain unrepaired, and many other services will have to stop. And, in the long term, ratepayers will be further disappointed, and complain further. The Council has decided upon a difficult and unpalatable course of action. Many ratepayers at the lower end of the income scale will find it difficult to pay the SRV, and we trust that the Council will accommodate these people, as is suggested in the proposed SRV document." (*Forum comment*)

Trust in the new Council

"It is evident to me that Councillors and council staff have put a considerable amount of time and effort into identifying an annual budget deficit of \$5.9 million which they state is needed to renew our roads, bridges, kerb and gutter, parks, drainage, buildings and other assets. They have acted responsibly in bringing this to attention of the community and seeking to provide solutions. For this reason I support the identified need for a rate rise for the purpose of restoring a sound economic basis and provision of services." (*Survey comment*)

"The new elected team is a welcome change for the region." (*Panel comment*)

"Council needs to have a strong focus on strategic planning for the region. There's been a lack of vision and foresight for many years – this is why people aren't coming to live here. Hopefully this is about to turn around." (*Survey comment*)

"The new council team is excellent – very optimistic about the future." (*Panel comment*)

"I am prepared to support council to get Armidale back on its feet - even if it means paying higher rates. I am committed to living in this community and want to see it thrive and develop. Managed decline is unthinkable if we want this beautiful town to progress. I do have faith in this council. It seems the best chance we have had in many years to lead Armidale in new and positive directions. " (*Survey comment*)

ATTACHMENT ONE – ENGAGEMENT MATERIALS

1A - YOUR SAY WEBSITE

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026>. The page header features the Armidale Regional Council logo and a navigation menu. The main banner reads "Have your say on Proposed Special Rate Variation 2023-2026" with a background image of a tree-lined street. Below the banner, the breadcrumb "Home / Special Rate Variation 2023-2026" is visible. The central content area is titled "Special Rate Variation 2023-2026" and includes social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Email. A bold heading states "Consultation is now closed". Below this, a sub-heading "Have your say on this rating proposal" is followed by two paragraphs explaining the council's financial challenges and the proposed 50% SRV over three years. A list of engagement options is provided: "Understand" (download information pack), "Respond" (take the survey), "Attend" (public meeting), "Comment" (public forum), and "Write" (submit). The page concludes with the statement: "At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to".

Special Rate Variation 2023-2026

Consultation is now closed

Have your say on this rating proposal

Over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent rates increase over and above the usual amount permitted by the state government each year. We are aiming to apply for a special rate variation (SRV) of 50% over three years which would result in a cumulative 58.81% additional rates income including the 7.69% allowable increase.

As a resident or ratepayer you are invited to have your say in a number of ways:

- Understand** - download and read the information pack on the right hand side of this page
- Respond** - take the survey below to express your views
- Attend** - come to a public meeting, with dates and venues are shown on the right
- Comment** - Make your comments below on the public forum
- Write** - send in your submission

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to

Special Rate Variation 2023-2026 X

https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026

ATO | Australian Ta... Intranet - J001636 I... WorkflowMax | Sara... ADMIN | Reporting H&R Block Home - myGov Other Bookmarks

As a resident or ratepayer you are invited to have your say in a number of ways:

- Understand** - download and read the information pack on the right hand side of this page
- Respond** - take the survey below to express your views
- Attend** - come to a public meeting, with dates and venues are shown on the right
- Comment** - Make your comments below on the public forum
- Write** - send in your submission

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

Send in a submission:

Submissions are invited and must be addressed to the General Manager, Armidale Regional Council, PO Box 75A, Armidale NSW 2350 or sent by email to council@armidale.nsw.gov.au

Submissions close Friday 30th September 2022.

Please be aware that if you make a submission, other people may have access to your comments and your name. This may be as a result of a report to a Council meeting. Reports to Council Meetings are available to the public.

WHAT WILL BE IMPACTED ON YOUR RATES NOTICE?

The proposed 50% SRV will only impact the two line items highlighted in red on your rates notice. This is made up of the base rate for your property category and the land value.

Rates Notice
2022-2023

95 Example Street, PO Box 75A, Armidale NSW 2350
Phone 1800 186 007 • info@armidale.nsw.gov.au • 689 59 642 954 201

ARMIDALE
Regional Council

Mr & Mrs Ratepayer
95 Example Street
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Assessment Number: 4321-9
Due Date: 31/08/2022
Issue Date: 25/07/2022
Rateable Value: 101,000
Valuation Base Date: 01 Jul 2019
Land Area: 723.9m²

PROPERTY LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION
95 Example Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350
Lot 1 DP 1234567

PROPERTY CATEGORY / RATES AND CHARGES	RATE IN \$ / UNIT CHARGE	RATEABLE VALUE / UNITS	AMOUNT
Residential - Armidale	0.005231	100,000	523.10
Residential - Armidale Base Amount	470.00	1	470.00
Residential - Sewerage Access Charge	525.00	1	525.00
Water Access Charge	315.00	1	315.00
Domestic Waste Service	436.00	1	436.00
Regional Landfill Levy	195.00	1	195.00
Regional Landfill Operation Charge	72.00	1	72.00
Armidale Drainage Charge	50.00	1	50.00
NET AMOUNT DUE			\$2,546.10

Special Rate Variation 2023-2026

https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026

ATO | Australian Ta... Intranet - J001636 I... WorkflowMax | Sara... ADMIN | Reporting H&R Block Home - myGov Other Bookmarks

Project Timeline

- IP&R and Budget Consultation**
Council discussed the SRV option with the community during the budget consultations
- Have your Say**
Council has resolved to seek community comments regarding the SRV option
- Council Decision**
Community comments will inform the Council's decision in November as to whether to apply to IPART for an SRV
- Apply to IPART**
Should Council decide to apply for an SRV, the applications will be due to IPART in February 2023 for determination and to commence in July 2023

Videos

Including Draft Budget 2022-23 Armidale Meeting
Planning and budget community meeting held earlier in the year.

Briefing Wednesday 21 September 2022
Proposed 50% Special Rate Variation

https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026/widgets/383104/videos/25908

Special Rate Variation 2023-2026

https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026

ATO | Australian Taxation Office | Intranet - J001636 | WorkflowMax | Sara... | ADMIN | Reporting | H&R Block | Home - myGov | Other Bookmarks

Information Pack

[ARC_SRV InformationPack.pdf \(612 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)

Community Panel presentation

[ARC SRV Community Panel Presentation for web FINAL.pdf \(1.36 MB\) \(pdf\)](#)

What will I pay?

[What Will I Pay - 2023-2026 SRV.pdf \(126 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)


Rate Myths

[Rate Myths.pdf \(292 KB\) \(pdf\)](#)


Special Rate Variation 2023-2026


https://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/special-rate-variation-2023-2026


ATO | Australian Ta... Intranet - J001636 I... WorkflowMax | Sara... ADMIN | Reporting H&R Block Home - myGov Other Bookmarks


 Rate Myths.pdf (292 KB) (pdf)

Key Dates

 Armidale Town Hall - 6pm to 8.30 pm
13 September 2022





 Guyra Bowling Club - 6pm to 8.30pm
14 September 2022

 Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm
15 September 2022


 Online meetings - 10am and 6pm
21 September 2022

Online community meetings

Register here for Special Rate Variation online Zoom meetings
Wednesday 21 September 6pm-7pm.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZ0qcuuorTgiHtwWQPrQ6824pMHn6nHNJDIC>

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Proposal for a Special Rate Variation 2023-2026

Information Pack for Community Feedback

What is our vision for our region?

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. It's our promise for how we will plan, advocate, deliver and celebrate everything that is needed to support and grow the Armidale Region into the future. It's a measure by which we will take every decision – it's our community contract. Our vision and plan will follow 6 key pillars:

- **Thriving Region** - We will broaden our economic base and develop initiatives to grow existing and new business, and we will attract new residents and tourists to our region
- **Connected Region** - we will improve and provide high quality connections within, and outside of the region
- **Future Region** - We will enhance the natural beauty of the region, and will create a region that is sustainable and resilient
- **Liveable Region** - We will develop and maintain pristine places and spaces, and provide facilities to foster an active and healthy community
- **Enriched Region** - We will improve the quality of life for our community and celebrate its culture and diversity
- **Strong Region** - we will be a productive, transparent and strong community always putting the needs of our community first

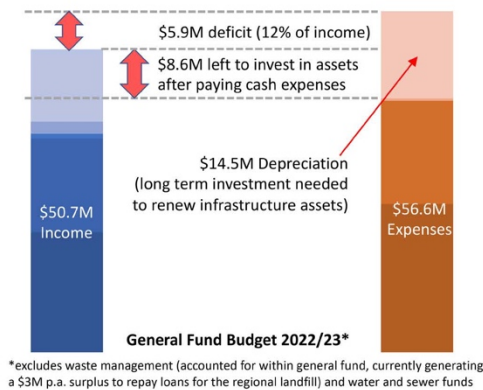
What is Council's current financial situation?

Over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low land rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

The 2022-2023 general budget (excluding waste, as well as water supply and sewer funds) forecasts income of \$50.7M and expenses of \$56.6M, a deficit of \$5.9M (12% of income).

The concern with this deficit is that once Council pays its cash operating expenses (employees, materials and services) there is only \$8.6M left to invest in our infrastructure assets, far less than the \$14.5M of depreciation expenses in our budget (depreciation reflects the long term investment needed to renew assets).

This is unsustainable. Over 10 years, a \$5.9M deficit equates to a \$59M shortfall in funding to renew our roads, bridges, kerb and gutter, parks, drainage, buildings and other assets.



What are our options to address the situation?

The two options for Armidale Regional Council are clear:

- 1. Managed Decline** - where operational services are cut to free up funds for renewal of ageing infrastructure assets (but the state of our assets will continue to worsen as we still won't have sufficient funds to keep up with renewal needs), or
- 2. Special Rate Variation** - SRV is part of the solution to restore the real cost of maintaining assets and providing services to grow and be sustainable.

Since 1977, rates and certain other revenues for councils have been regulated by NSW Government. Councils are only permitted to increase rates each year by the rate peg, unless they apply for an SRV to increase rates above the rate peg and have this approved. The rate peg is supposed to cover the normal increases in costs, something like CPI.

Since 2012, the rate peg has been determined by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART), who also assess SRV applications (under delegation from the NSW Minister for Local Government) against a set of guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government.

Managed decline: the ‘no SRV’ option

As noted above, Council isn’t generating enough income to invest in its infrastructure. If it doesn’t secure additional income from a Special Rate Variation, it will have no choice but to free up existing funds by cuts to operational services as part of a ‘managed decline’ strategy.

Under this scenario, Council would free up at least \$2M p.a. by way of cuts to services such as:

- Reducing road maintenance (pothole patching, maintenance grading)
- Reduced level of service in parks mowing and maintenance, toilet cleaning
- Reducing hours at libraries, swimming pools, customer service counter and museum
- Closing some sporting fields and parks
- Reduced activity in tourism marketing and events
- Reducing the economic development and regional activation programs
- Disposing of property and public assets
- Increasing fees for the preschool, airport, home support service
- Increasing commercial and community lease fees
- Decommissioning community buildings and facilities
- Refusing grants for new assets due to lack of funds to match grants/maintain assets)
- Ceasing the community grants program

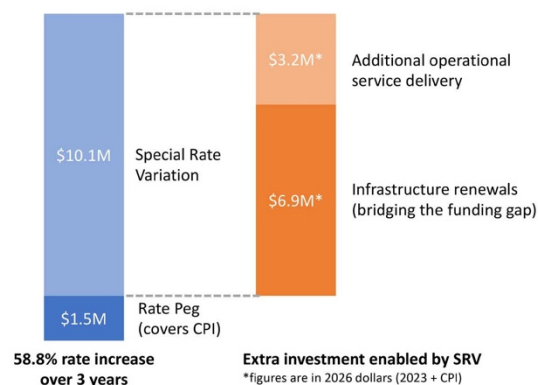
Obviously, such service cuts will have significant impacts on the community. This is not Council’s preferred option, and it is still not sustainable: the \$2M savings are far less than the \$5.9M deficit, hence the term ‘managed decline’.

Investment enabled by a special rate variation

Council is proposing a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 58.8% over 3 years which includes the rate peg. In three years, the SRV would generate an additional \$10.1M p.a. over and above the \$1.5M p.a. Council would gain via the rate peg alone.

The additional \$10.1M p.a. income from the SRV in 2026 will enable Council to:

- bridge the infrastructure renewal funding gap represented by the \$6.9M p.a. average deficit over the remaining 7 years of the LTFP
- invest an additional \$3.2M p.a. in operational service delivery (in contrast to \$2M p.a. in cuts under the ‘managed decline’ scenario).



Examples of the types of additional investment enabled by the SRV are summarised below.

Date Local Assets	What needs to be done...
Sealed local roads 650km	<p>Resealing is critical to avoid costly premature pavement failure. ARC has been averaging 11km per year but we need to be aiming for 55km.</p> <p>Rehabilitation of failed pavements; there's 37km (\$19M+) to fix now, but without an SRV this will take 10 years or more and, with continued under-investment in reseals, the rate of failures will be increasing.</p>
Unsealed local roads 1,060km	<p>Resheeting so roads are passable in the wet and have better ride quality. We've been averaging 30km per year but need to aim for 70km.</p> <p>Grading and other maintenance (e.g. vegetation) needs to increase.</p>
Bridges and culverts	<p>Replacing 5 timber bridges within 10 years; repairing a number of causeways in poor condition, unblocking and repairing pipe culverts.</p>
Footpaths and cycleways 130km	<p>Renewing 6km of our footpaths now (without an SRV this will take 10 years), plus additional maintenance to address trip hazards.</p> <p>Construct missing links (18km cycleways + 11km paths are prioritised)_</p>
Kerb and gutter 271km	<p>Renewal of 11km of failed kerb now, plus priority upgrades where kerb isn't provided; additional maintenance to repair smaller failed sections</p>
Urban stormwater drainage	<p>Re-lining or replacing pipes at the end of their life to avoid failures.</p> <p>Planning to identify and prioritise upgrades to address capacity and local flooding issues across the region (many areas face problems)</p>
Community buildings 264	<p>Maintenance and renewal of our community halls and facilities, public toilets and sports amenities, administration buildings, depots, etc. to keep these facilities operational, presentable and safe for users.</p>
Playgrounds 40 and Parks	<p>Maintenance to keep sites safe, clean and functional.</p> <p>Renewal of older items and upgrade of priority sites to improve facilities</p>
Sporting facilities 25	<p>Maintenance and renewals to keep facilities operational, presentable, and safe; targeted upgrades to priority sites</p>
Armidale Aquatic Centre	<p>Refurbishment and upgrade of the facility to improve the functionality of the site for community and replace assets at the end of their life</p>
Urban forest 20,000+ trees in public areas	<p>Inspections, assessments, pruning, removal and replacement of potentially dangerous trees (funds are only sufficient to do highest risk); ageing trees and increasing extreme weather events adds to problems</p>

How is Council working to be more efficient?

No matter what Council does, an SRV is required to restore the real cost of maintaining assets and providing services to grow and be sustainable. To play our role Council is remodelling itself with innovation and efficiency, and we are also working hard to keep operating costs under strict control. Council has actively sought additional revenue opportunities through, for instance, major State and Federal Grants, loan borrowings, and pricing policy reviews. Other revenue streams in recent years have also contributed to Council's financial sustainability, as have efficiency measures including service contracting, joint procurement contracts, partnership programs with other Councils and internal service reviews. Other improvement and efficiency measures have recently been introduced:

Better Asset Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct and implement asset condition assessments and data improvement for more efficient financial management and improved understanding of asset performance• Road reclassifications to transfer management to state government• Activation and maximising the utilisation of assets e.g. quarries• Building relationships with new business partners such as Fire and Rescue NSW to utilise our assets
Improved Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver a program of service planning across the organisation to understand customer experience, services challenges, future trends and service levels• Review the community engagement website for usability, cost efficiency and integration• Prepare a plan for the development and delivery of service reviews, including order of review for each department and mode of delivery
More Efficient Systems and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction of the deficits incurred by the Kolora aged care facility in Guyra• Review and improve cemetery booking and management system• Finalise the automation of Ebor Waste Transfer Station• Reduced time for order and payment processing of electricity accounts, along with reduced electricity costs from LED street lighting.• Introduce an online rates and e-invoicing system• New staff human resources system including online timesheets
Finding Cost Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Savings in Councillor fees and expenses• Reduction in employee costs• Review waste, water and sewer charges and reserve provisions• Implement Stage 2 of the Property Working Group• Saving on travel booking fees and staff time• Savings on property, plant & equipment (PPE) purchases• Lower insurance premium pricing due to Council merger• Savings on environmental monitoring cost

What kind of special rate variation is being proposed?

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent SRV of around 50% to be phased in over three years (2024-6), which would result in a cumulative 58.81% SRV including the rate peg (assumed to be 2.5% p.a.). The SRV would take effect from 2023-24.

	2024	2025	2026	TOTAL
Rate Peg*	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	7.69%
Special Variation	14.17%	14.17%	14.17%	48.82%
TOTAL	16.67%	16.67%	16.67%	58.81%

*The impact of a 2.5% p.a. rate peg on ratepayers overall is 2.5% p.a., but there are slight variations in the % increase in each land use category due to the impacts of rate harmonisation. These are between 2.43% p.a. (farmland) to 2.51% p.a. (residential). Note also the impact of SRV compared to rate peg only is actually 51.12% (58.81-7.69 as rate peg compounds SRV in 25 & 26).

The following table shows the impacts of the SRV on a property of average value in each land use category compared to the increases from the rate peg alone.

	Average land value (2019)	Average Rates* including SRV + rate peg				Increase Rate peg only	Increase due to SRV	Total Increase
		2023	2024	2025	2026			
Residential	140,000	1,095	1,278	1,491	1,739	85	559	644
Farmland	1,320,000	3,464	4,035	4,708	5,493	259	1,770	2,029
Business	250,000	3,940	4,596	5,362	6,255	304	2,011	2,315
Mining	50,000	5,455	6,363	7,424	8,661	420	2,786	3,206

*Impacts for individual properties may vary considerably due to the value of the property compared to the average for that land use category, the impacts of harmonisation of rates between former council areas and changes in the value of properties as assessed by the Valuer General (next valuation is due in 2023).

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November 2022. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

Council is also intending to decrease waste charges by decreasing the regional waste levy over the period (this was only in place until the loan for the regional landfill was repaid). This will reduce the impact of the SRV on average rates and the table below describes the impact on average rates in each rating category:

	Average Rates				Total Increase due to SRV	Less \$155 waste levy
	2023	2024	2025	2026		
Residential	1,095	1,278	1,491	1,739	559	404
Farmland	3,464	4,035	4,708	5,493	1,770	1,615
Business	3,940	4,596	5,362	6,255	2,011	1,856
Mining	5,455	6,363	7,424	8,661	2,786	2,631

What can ratepayers expect in cases of community hardship?

Council recognises that circumstances of financial hardship can arise requiring respect and compassion.

In cases of genuine hardship, Council will work with people to put affordable payment plans in place that are generally in line with the existing minimum payment arrangement criteria.

For further information please refer to the Hardship Support page on the Council website.

How can people Have their Say?

As a resident or ratepayer you are invited to read about the proposed SRV and have your say in a number of ways:

- **Respond** - take the survey on the Your Say website at yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au to express your views
- **Attend** - come to a public meeting:
 - 13 September - Armidale Town Hall, 6pm to 8.30 pm
 - 14 September - Guyra Bowling Club, 6pm to 8.30pm
 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm
- **Register** - on the Your Say website for an online meeting on 21 September at either 10am or 6pm
- **Comment** - Make your comments on the website discussion forum
- **Write** - send your submission to Council by Friday 30th September to the General Manager, Armidale Regional Council, PO Box 75A, Armidale NSW 2350 or send by email to council@armidale.nsw.gov.au

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will likely take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November 2022. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

WHAT WILL BE IMPACTED ON YOUR RATES NOTICE?

The proposed 50% SRV will only impact the two line items highlighted in red on your rates notice. This is made up of the base rate for your property category and the land value.

Rates Notice 2022-2023			
115 Rudden Street, PO Box 75A, Armidale NSW 2350 Phone: 1300 136 833 • council@armidale.nsw.gov.au ABN: 59 642 914 203			
ARMIDALE Regional Council			
Mr & Mrs Ratepayer 55 Example Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350		Assessment Number 4321-0 Due Date 31/08/2022 Issue Date 25/07/2022 Rateable Value 100,000 Valuation Base Date 01 Jul 2019 Land Area 733.5m ²	
PROPERTY LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION 55 Example Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350 Lot 1 DP 1234567			
PARTICULARS OF RATES AND CHARGES	RATE IN \$ / UNIT CHARGE	RATEABLE VALUE / UNITS	AMOUNT
Residential - Armidale	0.005231	100,000	523.10
Residential - Armidale Base Amount	470.00	1	470.00
Residential - Sewerage Access Charge	525.00	1	525.00
Water Access Charge	315.00	1	315.00
Domestic Waste Service	436.00	1	436.00
Regional Landfill Levy	155.00	1	155.00
Regional Landfill Operation Charge	72.00	1	72.00
Armidale Drainage Charge	50.00	1	50.00
NET AMOUNT DUE			\$2,546.10

1C - LETTER TO ALL HOUSEHOLDS



<Date>

Your ref:

Our ref: <TRIM file number(s)>

Address line one

Address line two

Address line three

Dear resident

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. However over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low (land) rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent special rate variation of around 50% over 3 years, which would take effect from 2023-24.

As a resident or ratepayer you are invited to read about these issues and have your say in a number of ways:

- **Understand** - download and read the information pack on the *Your Say* website at <http://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/> or visit either the Armidale or Guyra Library to view the information display or come into the Armidale Council building.
- **Respond** - take the survey on the *Your Say* website to express your views
- **Attend** - come to a public meeting:
 - 13 September - Armidale Town Hall, 6pm to 8.30 pm
 - 14 September - Guyra Bowling Club, 6pm to 8.30pm
 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm
- **Register** – on the *Your Say* website for an online meeting on 21 September at 10am or 6pm
- **Comment** - Make your comments on the website discussion forum
- **Write** - send your submission to Council by **Friday 30th September**

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

We invite your participation to inform our decision, and to ensure that we can deliver on our vision to grow our region into the future.

From the Mayor

Page 1 of 1

P 1300 136 833
E council@armidale.nsw.gov.au
W armidaleregional.nsw.gov.au
135 Rusden Street PO Box 75A Armidale NSW 2350

ABN 39 642 954 203

Some Rate Myths

MYTH 1

The proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) applies to the whole rates notice. Not true.

Response: The SRV only applies to the first two lines of a rates notice, as seen in the image below. These two lines contribute to the set pool of rates revenue which only grows by the rate peg set by IPART and or increased as part of an SRV process.

Rates Notice			
2022-2023		105 Rundle Street, PO Box 75A, Armidale NSW 2350, Phone: 1800 006 813 • council@armidale.nsw.gov.au, ABN 59 642 954 203	
Mr & Mrs Ratepayer 55 Example Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350		ARMIDALE Regional Council	
		Assessment Number	4321-0
		Due Date	31/08/2022
		Issue Date	25/07/2022
		Rateable Value	100,000
		Valuation Base Date	01 Jul 2019
		Land Area	723.5m ²
55 Example Street ARMIDALE NSW 2350 Lot 1 DP 1234567			
PARTICULARS OF RATES AND CHARGES	RATE IN \$ / UNIT CHARGE	RATEABLE VALUE / UNITS	AMOUNT
Residential - Armidale	0.005231	100,000	\$523.10
Residential - Armidale Base Amount	470.00	1	\$470.00
Residential - Sewerage Access Charge	525.00	1	\$525.00
Water Access Charge	315.00	1	\$315.00
Domestic Waste Service	436.00	1	\$436.00
Regional Landfill Levy	155.00	1	\$155.00
Regional Landfill Operation Charge	72.00	1	\$72.00
Armidale Drainage Charge	50.00	1	\$50.00
NET AMOUNT DUE			\$2,546.10

What will be impacted on your rates notice?

The proposed 50% SRV will only impact the two line items highlighted on your rates notice. This is made up of the base rate for your property category and the land value.

MYTH 2

Land values have risen so rates will rise accordingly. Not true.

Response: Land value is used as a way to distribute the set rates pool equitably. A rise in land value alone does not increase your rates liability, but how your land value changes in relation to all others in the rates pool does. Additionally, individual rates charges depend on a number of factors – including your rate in the dollar, your rates category, the changes due to rates harmonisation, and the change in your land value during the period. For example, if all land values rose by 50% in one year but the rate peg was set at 2.5%, then the total rate charges will only rise by 2.5%, all other things being equal. What changes is the charge for the rate in the dollar – see calculations below.

	YEAR 1		YEAR 2		
Land Value		\$100,00		\$150,000	Land value risen by 50%
Rate %		2.5%		2.5%	
Base Rate		\$470.00		\$470.00	
Rate \$	0.005231	\$523.10	0.0036529	\$547.93	Rate in \$ has fallen
Total Rate Revenue		\$993.10		\$1,017.93	Rate revenue has only risen by 2.5%

MYTH 3

There's lots of building activity so council must be raising a lot more rates. Not true.

Response: Total rate revenue can rise in a number of ways – by the rate peg, by an SRV or by adjustments to land values and number of assessments (supplementary adjustments, some of which are associated with sub-divisions). In the latter case, rates revenue has risen by an average of just 0.23% per year in five of the past six years. The other year was a fall and has not been included in the average.

MYTH 4

The increase in rates each year by the rate peg should be sufficient to cover increased costs. Not necessarily.

Reason: Since 2005-2006, the rate peg has averaged 2.76% per year. At the same time, the Sydney CPI has averaged 2.47%. The rate peg however is calculated based on four different factors which differ to the CPI underlying data – change in the Local Government Cost Index, a productivity factor, other adjustments and a population factor which adjusts for supplementary adjustments (as mentioned in myth 3).

Even with this complexity, the rate peg will only provide council with sufficient funds to keep doing everything the same as prior years which doesn't allow for any improvements like sealing an unsealed road or higher maintenance of parks and gardens due to higher rainfall. And in recent years, the rate peg has not been reflective of the significant increases in the cost of things like award step increases for staff, fuel (28% increase) and bridge contracts (44% increase).

MYTH 5

A 50% SRV is different to a 58.8% SRV. Not necessarily.

Council is proposing a permanent 50% SRV. To make the increase more manageable Council is proposing that the increase be phased in over three years. As a consequence, the impact of compounding the rate increases over three years results in a total increase of 58.8%. The following examples show how the calculation works for an estimated 2.5% rate peg and a 16.67% SRV, both over three years.

Rating	SRV Years				Overall
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	
Without SRV					
Rates	100.00	102.50	105.06	107.69	
Rate %		2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	7.69%
With SRV					
Rates	100.00	116.67	136.12	158.80	
Special Rate Variation		16.67%	16.67%	16.66%	58.80%
Variance					51.11%



Our rates are high compared to other similar sized councils. Not true.

Reason: Our total rate income as a percentage of land value is the seventh lowest in a group of twenty-eight similar sized and aspirational councils. Our average residential rate is seventh lowest in this group, our farmland rate is fifth highest and our business rate is in the middle of the group (14)¹. But rate comparisons are only part of the story as many of these other councils don't have the facilities or services offered by Armidale Regional Council.

Places and Spaces



Parks & Facilities

22 Sportsfields
77 Urban Parks
40 Playgrounds
1 Skate Park
1 Showground
2 Saleyards
15 Operational Cemeteries
2 Aquatic Centres
2,000 street trees inspected/pruned annually
1 Preschool/Childcare Centre
23 Toilet Blocks
7 Community Halls



Arts & Culture

3 museums
7 volunteers



Libraries

120,000 library visitors
10,766 library members
221,893 items loaned
368 events held in the libraries (pre-Covid)
65,900 public enquiries answered

Airport (pre-Covid)

Up to 100 flights per week
140,000 passengers per year

Property & Machinery

476 items of mechanical plant fleet
52 public buildings maintained

Our Natural Beauty

425,000 annual visitors to our National Parks: Oxley Wild Rivers, Cathedral Rock, Guy Fawkes, New England

Tourism & Events (pre-Covid)

322,000 domestic day visitors
278,000 domestic overnight visitors
9,000 international visitors
\$99.4 million generated in accommodation and food services
\$28 million generated from Arts & Recreation Services
\$17 million generated from sporting events

Services We Provide



Roads & Maintenance

206km of urban roads
444km of non-urban roads
1,078km rural unsealed roads
122km Regional Roads subject to Block Grant funding from TfNSW
102 concrete and 21 timber bridges
285 cattle grids
150km of Main, Regional & State roads

Waste Management

35,673 tonnes of waste received
60.6% or 21,628 tonnes of waste recycled, recovered or reused
39.4% or 14,045 tonnes of waste buried in landfill
10,800 residential kerbside collections
960 commercial kerbside collections
400 public place litter bins



Customer Contact

22,500 phone enquiries
16,402 counter enquiries
18,193 cashier transactions
648 Cemetery applications/enquiries
169 Barking Dog Complaints
817 Companion Animals Registrations and applications

Water

9,578 residential homes and 658 commercial properties supplied with water
3600 million litres supplied
5 dams (storage capacity of 13645 ML) and 16 clear water reservoirs (storage capacity of 39ML)
13 water pump stations
450km water mains

Sewer

305km sewer mains
2664ML treated and 1263ML reused for irrigation

Corporate Services



Insurances & WHS

12 Claims 2020/21
Average Cost of claim \$26,846.00
Gross Premium for 2020/21
\$734,307.17

Assets

Assets include Buildings, Roads, Water Network, Sewerage Network, Stormwater Drainage, Other Structures/Infrastructure
Oldest Asset is Town Hall - completed 1882
Total Asset Value \$1,190,951,000
Total Asset Maintenance Costs \$13,857,000

Note 1: Based on category four councils (plus Inverell and Coffs Harbour) as disclosed in the 2020-21 time series data published by the Office of Local Government.

Armidale Regional Council Workforce

Total Staff
(including
casuals)

327

Total
Full Time
Equivalent
(FTE)

280

Female
staff

32%

Male
staff

68%

Average
age of
workforce

44.5
YEARS

Average
length of
service

8.11
YEARS

Armidale Regional Council Snapshot



Population

29,074

Employed
Residents

14,373

Gross Regional
Product

\$1.63 billion



Largest Industry
Education
& Training



Land Area

7,807 km²



Population Density

0.4 persons
per hectare



Local Jobs

14,970



Local Businesses

2,895

1E – WHAT WILL I PAY? FACT SHEET

2023-2026 SRV (Special Rate Variation) - What Would I Pay?

Step 1:- Retrieve your recently sent 2022/23 Rates Notice. Confirm your rating category (eg. Residential - Armidale) and the 'Rateable Value' on your notice.

Step 2:- Find your rating category (in green) below and the closest 'Rateable Value' of your property (in blue).

Step 3:- The amount in the 2022/23 column should be reflective of the total general rates that you are paying this year (being the addition of the first two amounts on the Rates Notice). The amounts (in yellow) will give an indication of the general rates payable over the following three years which includes the proposed SRV and any rating category harmonisation impacts.

Please Note:- the below information is an estimate of annual general rates only. It does not include any other charges related to Water, Waste or Sewer and doesn't include any pension rebates.

Rating Category: Residential - Armidale

Description: This category is the same before and after harmonisation

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 601	\$ 637	\$ 680	\$ 729
\$ 50,000	\$ 732	\$ 804	\$ 889	\$ 988
\$ 75,000	\$ 862	\$ 971	\$ 1,099	\$ 1,247
\$ 90,000	\$ 941	\$ 1,072	\$ 1,224	\$ 1,402
\$ 100,000	\$ 993	\$ 1,138	\$ 1,308	\$ 1,506
\$ 110,000	\$ 1,045	\$ 1,205	\$ 1,392	\$ 1,610
\$ 125,000	\$ 1,124	\$ 1,306	\$ 1,518	\$ 1,765
\$ 140,000	\$ 1,202	\$ 1,406	\$ 1,643	\$ 1,920
\$ 150,000	\$ 1,255	\$ 1,473	\$ 1,727	\$ 2,024
\$ 175,000	\$ 1,385	\$ 1,640	\$ 1,937	\$ 2,283
\$ 200,000	\$ 1,516	\$ 1,807	\$ 2,146	\$ 2,542
\$ 250,000	\$ 1,778	\$ 2,141	\$ 2,565	\$ 3,060
\$ 300,000	\$ 2,039	\$ 2,475	\$ 2,984	\$ 3,578
\$ 400,000	\$ 2,562	\$ 3,144	\$ 3,822	\$ 4,614
\$ 500,000	\$ 3,086	\$ 3,812	\$ 4,660	\$ 5,650
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 5,701	\$ 7,154	\$ 8,851	\$ 10,830

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$17	\$128
\$34	\$256
\$50	\$385
\$60	\$462
\$67	\$513
\$74	\$564
\$84	\$641
\$94	\$718
\$94	\$769
\$101	\$898
\$117	\$1,026
\$168	\$1,282
\$201	\$1,539
\$268	\$2,052
\$336	\$2,565
\$671	\$5,129

Rating Category: Residential - Guyra

Description: This category is the same before and after harmonisation.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 376	\$ 416	\$ 461	\$ 515
\$ 50,000	\$ 513	\$ 591	\$ 683	\$ 790
\$ 55,000	\$ 540	\$ 626	\$ 727	\$ 845
\$ 60,000	\$ 567	\$ 661	\$ 772	\$ 900
\$ 75,000	\$ 649	\$ 767	\$ 904	\$ 1,065
\$ 90,000	\$ 731	\$ 872	\$ 1,037	\$ 1,230
\$ 100,000	\$ 785	\$ 942	\$ 1,126	\$ 1,340
\$ 125,000	\$ 922	\$ 1,118	\$ 1,347	\$ 1,615
\$ 150,000	\$ 1,058	\$ 1,294	\$ 1,569	\$ 1,890
\$ 200,000	\$ 1,331	\$ 1,645	\$ 2,012	\$ 2,440
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,876	\$ 2,347	\$ 2,898	\$ 3,540

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$18	\$139
\$36	\$277
\$40	\$305
\$44	\$333
\$54	\$416
\$65	\$499
\$73	\$555
\$91	\$693
\$109	\$832
\$145	\$1,109
\$218	\$1,664

Rating Category: Residential - Ebor

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq Council area and will be included with Residential Non-Urban (Armidale) properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 352	\$ 349	\$ 363	\$ 390
\$ 40,000	\$ 441	\$ 448	\$ 443	\$ 485
\$ 50,000	\$ 500	\$ 513	\$ 496	\$ 549
\$ 60,000	\$ 559	\$ 579	\$ 549	\$ 613

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$22)	\$37
(\$51)	\$45
(\$70)	\$50
(\$89)	\$55

Rating Category: Residential - Hillgrove

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq Council area and will be included with Residential Non-Urban (Armidale) properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 15,000	\$ 461	\$ 399	\$ 310	\$ 326
\$ 20,000	\$ 543	\$ 460	\$ 336	\$ 358
\$ 25,000	\$ 625	\$ 521	\$ 363	\$ 390
\$ 30,000	\$ 707	\$ 582	\$ 390	\$ 422
\$ 40,000	\$ 871	\$ 705	\$ 443	\$ 485
\$ 50,000	\$ 1,036	\$ 827	\$ 496	\$ 549
\$ 75,000	\$ 1,446	\$ 1,133	\$ 629	\$ 709
\$ 80,000	\$ 1,528	\$ 1,195	\$ 655	\$ 741

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$171)	(\$135)
(\$606)	(\$186)
(\$606)	(\$236)
(\$916)	(\$286)
(\$978)	(\$386)
(\$606)	(\$486)
(\$916)	(\$737)
(\$978)	(\$787)

Rating Category: Residential - Wollomombi

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq Council area and will be included with Residential Non-Urban (Armidale) properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 15,000	\$ 399	\$ 357	\$ 310	\$ 326
\$ 25,000	\$ 521	\$ 462	\$ 363	\$ 390
\$ 30,000	\$ 583	\$ 514	\$ 390	\$ 422
\$ 35,000	\$ 644	\$ 566	\$ 416	\$ 453

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$109)	(\$73)
(\$191)	(\$132)
(\$233)	(\$161)
(\$274)	(\$190)

Rating Category: Residential - Village

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Guyra Shire area and will be included with all Residential Non-Urban (Guyra) properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 307	\$ 326	\$ 363	\$ 390
\$ 30,000	\$ 330	\$ 353	\$ 390	\$ 422
\$ 40,000	\$ 377	\$ 408	\$ 443	\$ 485
\$ 50,000	\$ 423	\$ 462	\$ 496	\$ 549
\$ 65,000	\$ 493	\$ 544	\$ 576	\$ 645
\$ 75,000	\$ 540	\$ 598	\$ 629	\$ 709
\$ 80,000	\$ 563	\$ 625	\$ 655	\$ 741
\$ 100,000	\$ 656	\$ 734	\$ 762	\$ 868

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$23	\$83
\$20	\$92
\$13	\$109
\$7	\$126
(\$3)	\$152
(\$10)	\$169
(\$13)	\$178
(\$27)	\$212

Rating Category: Residential Non-Urban (Guyra)

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Guyra Shire area and will be included with all other Residential Non-Urban properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 5,000	\$ 245	\$ 250	\$ 257	\$ 262
\$ 15,000	\$ 274	\$ 290	\$ 310	\$ 326
\$ 25,000	\$ 304	\$ 330	\$ 363	\$ 390
\$ 35,000	\$ 333	\$ 370	\$ 416	\$ 453
\$ 45,000	\$ 362	\$ 411	\$ 469	\$ 517
\$ 60,000	\$ 406	\$ 471	\$ 549	\$ 613
\$ 70,000	\$ 436	\$ 511	\$ 602	\$ 677
\$ 90,000	\$ 495	\$ 591	\$ 709	\$ 805
\$ 100,000	\$ 524	\$ 631	\$ 762	\$ 868
\$ 125,000	\$ 598	\$ 732	\$ 895	\$ 1,028
\$ 150,000	\$ 671	\$ 832	\$ 1,028	\$ 1,188
\$ 200,000	\$ 818	\$ 1,032	\$ 1,294	\$ 1,507
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,112	\$ 1,434	\$ 1,826	\$ 2,145
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,406	\$ 1,835	\$ 2,357	\$ 2,784

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$53	\$17
\$106	\$52
\$158	\$86
\$211	\$121
\$238	\$155
\$264	\$207
\$290	\$241
\$317	\$310
\$343	\$344
\$370	\$431
\$370	\$517
\$396	\$689
\$422	\$1,033
\$528	\$1,378

Rating Category: Residential Non-Urban (Armidale)

Description: This category previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq Council area and will be included with all other Residential Non-Urban properties from 2024-25

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 50,000	\$ 453	\$ 440	\$ 496	\$ 549
\$ 100,000	\$ 621	\$ 661	\$ 762	\$ 868
\$ 150,000	\$ 789	\$ 881	\$ 1,028	\$ 1,188
\$ 200,000	\$ 957	\$ 1,101	\$ 1,294	\$ 1,507
\$ 225,000	\$ 1,041	\$ 1,211	\$ 1,427	\$ 1,667
\$ 250,000	\$ 1,125	\$ 1,321	\$ 1,560	\$ 1,826
\$ 275,000	\$ 1,209	\$ 1,431	\$ 1,693	\$ 1,986
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,293	\$ 1,542	\$ 1,826	\$ 2,145
\$ 325,000	\$ 1,377	\$ 1,652	\$ 1,959	\$ 2,305
\$ 350,000	\$ 1,461	\$ 1,762	\$ 2,092	\$ 2,465
\$ 375,000	\$ 1,545	\$ 1,872	\$ 2,224	\$ 2,624
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,629	\$ 1,982	\$ 2,357	\$ 2,784
\$ 500,000	\$ 1,965	\$ 2,423	\$ 2,889	\$ 3,422

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$23)	\$96
\$9	\$247
\$40	\$399
\$72	\$550
\$88	\$626
\$104	\$701
\$120	\$777
\$136	\$852
\$152	\$928
\$168	\$1,004
\$184	\$1,079
\$199	\$1,155
\$263	\$1,457

Rating Category: Business - Armidale

Description: Now harmonised (with Armidale - Industrial)

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 50,000	\$ 1,564	\$ 1,713	\$ 1,865	\$ 2,055
\$ 100,000	\$ 2,248	\$ 2,546	\$ 2,851	\$ 3,230
\$ 150,000	\$ 2,932	\$ 3,379	\$ 3,836	\$ 4,405
\$ 200,000	\$ 3,616	\$ 4,213	\$ 4,822	\$ 5,580
\$ 260,000	\$ 4,437	\$ 5,212	\$ 6,005	\$ 6,990
\$ 300,000	\$ 4,984	\$ 5,879	\$ 6,793	\$ 7,930
\$ 350,000	\$ 5,668	\$ 6,712	\$ 7,778	\$ 9,105
\$ 400,000	\$ 6,352	\$ 7,545	\$ 8,764	\$ 10,280
\$ 500,000	\$ 7,721	\$ 9,212	\$ 10,735	\$ 12,630
\$ 600,000	\$ 9,089	\$ 10,878	\$ 12,706	\$ 14,980
\$ 700,000	\$ 10,457	\$ 12,544	\$ 14,677	\$ 17,330
\$ 800,000	\$ 11,825	\$ 14,210	\$ 16,648	\$ 19,680
\$ 900,000	\$ 13,193	\$ 15,877	\$ 18,619	\$ 22,030
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 14,561	\$ 17,543	\$ 20,590	\$ 24,379

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$64	\$491
\$129	\$982
\$193	\$1,473
\$257	\$1,964
\$334	\$2,553
\$386	\$2,946
\$450	\$3,436
\$514	\$3,927
\$643	\$4,909
\$771	\$5,891
\$900	\$6,873
\$1,028	\$7,855
\$1,157	\$8,837
\$1,285	\$9,818

Rating Category: Business - Guyra

Description: This category is the same before and after harmonisation.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 654	\$ 728	\$ 808	\$ 905
\$ 50,000	\$ 897	\$ 1,046	\$ 1,207	\$ 1,401
\$ 75,000	\$ 1,141	\$ 1,364	\$ 1,605	\$ 1,896
\$ 100,000	\$ 1,385	\$ 1,682	\$ 2,003	\$ 2,392
\$ 200,000	\$ 2,359	\$ 2,955	\$ 3,596	\$ 4,374
\$ 300,000	\$ 3,334	\$ 4,227	\$ 5,189	\$ 6,356
\$ 400,000	\$ 4,308	\$ 5,499	\$ 6,782	\$ 8,338

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$33	\$252
\$66	\$504
\$99	\$755
\$132	\$1,007
\$264	\$2,015
\$395	\$3,022
\$527	\$4,029

Rating Category: Business - Village (Guyra)

Description: Separate categories previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra Council areas. Under rates harmonisation these will be combined from 2024-25.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 248	\$ 279	\$ 325	\$ 351
\$ 50,000	\$ 343	\$ 398	\$ 459	\$ 512
\$ 75,000	\$ 439	\$ 517	\$ 594	\$ 673
\$ 100,000	\$ 534	\$ 635	\$ 729	\$ 834
\$ 200,000	\$ 917	\$ 1,111	\$ 1,267	\$ 1,479
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,299	\$ 1,586	\$ 1,806	\$ 2,123
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,681	\$ 2,061	\$ 2,344	\$ 2,768

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$45	\$104
\$52	\$169
\$59	\$235
\$66	\$300
\$94	\$562
\$122	\$824
\$150	\$1,086

Rating Category: Business - Non-Urban (Armidale)

Description: Separate categories previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra Council areas. Under rates harmonisation these will be combined from 2024-25.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 25,000	\$ 342	\$ 378	\$ 325	\$ 351
\$ 50,000	\$ 428	\$ 501	\$ 459	\$ 512
\$ 75,000	\$ 515	\$ 625	\$ 594	\$ 673
\$ 100,000	\$ 602	\$ 748	\$ 729	\$ 834
\$ 200,000	\$ 948	\$ 1,241	\$ 1,267	\$ 1,479
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,295	\$ 1,734	\$ 1,806	\$ 2,123
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,641	\$ 2,227	\$ 2,344	\$ 2,768

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$49)	\$9
(\$33)	\$84
(\$17)	\$158
(\$1)	\$233
\$63	\$531
\$127	\$829
\$191	\$1,127

Rating Category: Farmland (Guyra)

Description: Separate categories previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra Council areas. Under rates harmonisation these will be combined from 2024-25.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 50,000	\$ 935	\$ 1,059	\$ 1,140	\$ 1,170
\$ 100,000	\$ 1,020	\$ 1,168	\$ 1,280	\$ 1,340
\$ 200,000	\$ 1,190	\$ 1,385	\$ 1,561	\$ 1,679
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,361	\$ 1,603	\$ 1,841	\$ 2,019
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,531	\$ 1,821	\$ 2,121	\$ 2,359
\$ 500,000	\$ 1,701	\$ 2,038	\$ 2,402	\$ 2,698
\$ 600,000	\$ 1,871	\$ 2,256	\$ 2,682	\$ 3,038
\$ 700,000	\$ 2,041	\$ 2,474	\$ 2,962	\$ 3,378
\$ 800,000	\$ 2,212	\$ 2,692	\$ 3,243	\$ 3,717
\$ 900,000	\$ 2,382	\$ 2,909	\$ 3,523	\$ 4,057
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 2,552	\$ 3,127	\$ 3,803	\$ 4,397
\$ 1,500,000	\$ 3,403	\$ 4,215	\$ 5,205	\$ 6,095
\$ 2,000,000	\$ 4,254	\$ 5,304	\$ 6,606	\$ 7,793
\$ 2,500,000	\$ 5,105	\$ 6,392	\$ 8,008	\$ 9,492
\$ 3,000,000	\$ 5,956	\$ 7,481	\$ 9,410	\$ 11,190
\$ 4,000,000	\$ 7,658	\$ 9,658	\$ 12,213	\$ 14,587
\$ 5,000,000	\$ 9,360	\$ 11,835	\$ 15,016	\$ 17,984
\$ 10,000,000	\$ 17,870	\$ 22,719	\$ 29,032	\$ 34,967
\$ 15,000,000	\$ 26,380	\$ 33,604	\$ 43,048	\$ 51,951
\$ 20,000,000	\$ 34,890	\$ 44,489	\$ 57,064	\$ 68,934

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$168	\$235
\$186	\$319
\$221	\$489
\$257	\$658
\$292	\$828
\$328	\$997
\$364	\$1,167
\$399	\$1,336
\$435	\$1,506
\$470	\$1,675
\$506	\$1,845
\$684	\$2,692
\$862	\$3,539
\$1,040	\$4,387
\$1,218	\$5,234
\$1,574	\$6,929
\$1,930	\$8,624
\$3,710	\$17,097
\$5,490	\$25,571
\$7,270	\$34,044

Rating Category: Farmland - Intensive (Guyra)

Description: This category is the same before and after harmonisation.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 400,000	\$ 4,279	\$ 4,686	\$ 5,633	\$ 6,483
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 8,973	\$ 9,990	\$ 12,357	\$ 14,484

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$288	\$2,204
\$721	\$5,511

Rating Category: Farmland (Armidale)

Description: Separate categories previously existed for the ex-Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra Council areas. Under rates harmonisation these will be combined from 2024-25.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 50,000	\$ 1,106	\$ 1,123	\$ 1,140	\$ 1,170
\$ 100,000	\$ 1,213	\$ 1,245	\$ 1,280	\$ 1,340
\$ 200,000	\$ 1,425	\$ 1,490	\$ 1,561	\$ 1,679
\$ 300,000	\$ 1,638	\$ 1,736	\$ 1,841	\$ 2,019
\$ 400,000	\$ 1,851	\$ 1,981	\$ 2,121	\$ 2,359
\$ 500,000	\$ 2,064	\$ 2,226	\$ 2,402	\$ 2,698
\$ 600,000	\$ 2,276	\$ 2,471	\$ 2,682	\$ 3,038
\$ 700,000	\$ 2,489	\$ 2,716	\$ 2,962	\$ 3,378
\$ 800,000	\$ 2,702	\$ 2,962	\$ 3,243	\$ 3,717
\$ 900,000	\$ 2,914	\$ 3,207	\$ 3,523	\$ 4,057
\$ 1,000,000	\$ 3,127	\$ 3,452	\$ 3,803	\$ 4,397
\$ 1,500,000	\$ 4,191	\$ 4,678	\$ 5,205	\$ 6,095
\$ 2,000,000	\$ 5,254	\$ 5,904	\$ 6,606	\$ 7,793
\$ 2,500,000	\$ 6,318	\$ 7,130	\$ 8,008	\$ 9,492
\$ 3,000,000	\$ 7,381	\$ 8,356	\$ 9,410	\$ 11,190
\$ 4,000,000	\$ 9,508	\$ 10,808	\$ 12,213	\$ 14,587
\$ 5,000,000	\$ 11,635	\$ 13,260	\$ 15,016	\$ 17,984
\$ 10,000,000	\$ 22,270	\$ 25,519	\$ 29,032	\$ 34,967
\$ 15,000,000	\$ 32,905	\$ 37,779	\$ 43,048	\$ 51,951
\$ 30,000,000	\$ 64,810	\$ 74,557	\$ 85,095	\$ 102,901

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
(\$3)	\$63
(\$7)	\$127
(\$14)	\$254
(\$21)	\$381
(\$28)	\$508
(\$35)	\$635
(\$41)	\$762
(\$48)	\$889
(\$55)	\$1,016
(\$62)	\$1,143
(\$69)	\$1,270
(\$104)	\$1,905
(\$138)	\$2,539
(\$173)	\$3,174
(\$207)	\$3,809
(\$276)	\$5,079
(\$345)	\$6,349
(\$690)	\$12,697
(\$1,035)	\$19,046
(\$2,070)	\$38,091

Rating Category: Mining

Description: This category is the same before and after harmonisation.

Rateable Value	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
\$ 5,000	\$ 1,425	\$ 1,512	\$ 1,613	\$ 1,732
\$ 20,000	\$ 2,702	\$ 3,048	\$ 3,453	\$ 3,926
\$ 30,000	\$ 3,552	\$ 4,072	\$ 4,680	\$ 5,389
\$ 50,000	\$ 5,254	\$ 6,121	\$ 7,134	\$ 8,315
\$ 100,000	\$ 9,508	\$ 11,241	\$ 13,267	\$ 15,630
\$ 200,000	\$ 18,015	\$ 21,483	\$ 25,534	\$ 30,261
\$ 300,000	\$ 26,523	\$ 31,724	\$ 37,801	\$ 44,891

Increase / (Decrease) 23/24-25/26	
No SRV \$	With SRV \$
\$40	\$306
\$160	\$1,225
\$240	\$1,837
\$401	\$3,061
\$801	\$6,123
\$1,602	\$12,245
\$2,403	\$18,368

1F – COMMUNITY SURVEY

Have your say on Proposed Special Rate Variation 2023-2026



Proposed SRV 2023-2026 - Take the Survey

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. It's our promise for how we will plan, advocate, deliver and celebrate everything that is needed to support and grow the Armidale Region into the future.

However over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council is working to improve its efficiencies, however the existing budget deficit means that we don't have enough to maintain our local assets. Without additional rate income, we will have two options:

1. **Managed Decline** - where operational services are cut to free up funds for renewal of ageing infrastructure assets (but the state of our assets will continue to worsen as we still won't have sufficient funds to keep up with renewal needs), or
2. **Special Rate Variation** - to increase our rating income and restore the real cost of maintaining assets and providing services to grow and be sustainable.

All About You

1. Have you read the Information pack about the Special Rate Variation proposed for 2023-2026? *Please circle the correct answer:*

Yes

No

2. Where do you live?

- ☐ Armidale
- ☐ Armidale – rural areas
- ☐ Guyra
- ☐ Guyra – rural areas
- ☐ Ebor
- ☐ Hillgrove
- ☐ Wollomombi
- ☐ Ben Lomond
- ☐ Llangothlin
- ☐ Black Mountain
- ☐ Wards Mistake
- ☐ Other _____

3. What kinds of rates do you pay?

- ☐ Residential
- ☐ Residential (Non-Urban/Village)
- ☐ Farmland
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Mining
- ☐ I don't pay rates

(answer can be more than one category)



Council Management and Efficiencies

The newly elected Council with its refreshed management team has recently introduced some productivity improvements and management efficiencies:

- Improved asset management
- More responsive customer service
- More Efficient Systems and Processes
- Finding Cost Savings

4. How confident are you that your new Council is working towards financial sustainability and governing efficiently and responsibly? *Please tick the box for the correct answer:*

- ☐ Very confident
☐ Quite confident
☐ Not very confident
☐ Not confident at all

5. Do you have any comments or suggestions to improve Council management efficiency?

Option One – Managed Decline

Unfortunately the Council budget is currently in deficit, and without additional funds Council will need to reduce spending on assets and services.

6. If Council needs to reduce its spending to ensure that local assets do not fall into disrepair, how supportive would you be of these options? *Please tick the column for the correct answer:*

	Very supportive	Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not at all supportive
Worsening road conditions				
Reduced mowing, maintenance and toilet cleaning in parks				
Reducing hours at the libraries, swimming pools, customer service counter and museum				
Closing some sporting fields and parks				
Reduced activity in tourism marketing and events				
Reducing economic development				
Disposing of property and public assets				
Increasing fees for the preschool, airport, home support service				
Increasing commercial and community lease fees				

	Very supportive	Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not at all supportive
Decommissioning community buildings and facilities				
Refusing state and federal government grants for new assets due to lack of matching funds or funds for ongoing maintenance				
Ceasing the community grants program				

7. Do you have any other ideas for saving public money?

Option Two – Special Rate Variation

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent SRV of 50% over three years, which would result in a cumulative 58.81% SRV including the 7.69% rate peg. The SRV would take effect from 2023-24, subject to IPART approval.

8. Do you support additional funds from the SRV being made available for:

	Very supportive	Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not at all supportive
Maintaining local roads – sealed and unsealed				
Repairing timber bridges				
Renewing existing and building new footpaths and cycleways				
Relining and upgrading our urban stormwater drainage system				
Maintaining community buildings				
Maintaining parks and sporting fields				
Maintaining local playgrounds				
Economic development				
Planning the growth of the area				
Maintaining local assets				
Maintaining public space and amenity				

Conclusion

Taking into account the combined effect of the SRV and rate peg, the average increase after three years will be as follows. Note that council is exploring the opportunity to reduce the regional landfill waste levy by \$155 for all properties to help offset the impact of the SRV.

	Average land value (2019)	Average Rates* including SRV + rate peg				Increase Rate peg only	Increase due to SRV	Total Increase
		2023	2024	2025	2026			
Residential	140,000	1,095	1,278	1,491	1,740	84	560	644
Farmland	1,320,000	3,460	4,036	4,709	5,494	266	1,769	2,035
Business	250,000	3,940	4,597	5,363	6,257	303	2,014	2,317
Mining	50,000	5,455	6,364	7,425	8,663	419	2,789	3,208

9. How manageable is this increase for your property (ies)? *Please tick the correct answer:*

- ☐ Very manageable
- ☐ Quite manageable
- ☐ Slightly unmanageable
- ☐ Very unmanageable

10. Which option do you support overall? *Please tick the correct answer:*

- ☐ Managed decline
- ☐ Special rate variation

11. Do you have any other comments?

Thank you for taking our survey, your responses will assist Council in its decision whether to apply to IPART for a special rate variation.

1G – PUBLIC MEETING PRESENTATION

See attached slides under separate cover.

ATTACHMENT TWO - SUBMISSIONS

See redacted submissions under separate cover.