

## **Council commences community consultation for its 'Options For Achieving A Better Road Network' Strategy**

### **Media Release**

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**EMBARGOED UNTIL 1.00AM WEDNESDAY, 5 NOVEMBER 2014**

On Monday 3 November 2014, Greater Hume Shire Council released its Community Engagement Guide – Options for Achieving a Better Road Network.

Throughout this week residents will receive a comprehensive booklet explaining the challenges facing Council to adequately fund ongoing maintenance and replacement of assets including sealed and unsealed roads, bridges and drainage.

“Like many local government areas, each year when preparing its annual budget Greater Hume Shire has been continually challenged to fund the ongoing maintenance and replacement of Council’s assets including its extensive sealed and unsealed road network”, said Mayor, Cr Heather Wilton.

In 2012, a large scale community survey identified that maintenance of sealed and unsealed rural roads and town streets were three of the five top activities where Council’s services were not meeting community expectations.

As a consequence, Council has in the past two years been actively considering its options for a Special Rate Variation, which would result in an increase in rating above the normal rate peg increase as set each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Broadly, the proposal is that properties with the average valuation within each rating category will pay an additional amount of approximately \$50 above rate pegging each year for three years. The special rate variation will apply to rates for three years commencing 1 July 2015 with the revenue retained permanently in Council’s rate base from the 2017/2018 financial year.

“We understand that rate increases of any kind are never welcomed, however, it is Council’s view that a sustainable and affordable increase in rates is essential if Council is to meet the needs and expectations of the community across a range of services”, added Mayor, Cr Wilton.

Council is proposing two options for residents to consider:

**Option 1 – a sustainable increase in rates for asset renewal and improved service levels including the Special Rate Variation**

or

**Option 2 – no rate increase above rate peg, which could potentially result in a decline in services to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of roads in the shire.**

The booklet delivered to all ratepayers outlines many of Council's achievements in recent years, and in detail explains Options 1 and 2.

Additionally, more information about the strategy can be read on Council's website, which includes an online rates calculator at

<http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au/CouncilServices/EngineeringServices/SpecialRateVariation.aspx>

Council has engaged IRIS Research to conduct an independent telephone survey during November to gauge community attitudes regarding the strategy. If contacted, Council encourages residents to keep the booklet handy should they wish to participate.

Community information sessions will also be held in each of the five main towns in the shire later this month, where residents can talk face to face with councillors and staff regarding the proposal.

Importantly, during the community consultation phase, Council is seeking feedback from its residents and ratepayers about the proposal.

Council is encouraging residents to participate in the community information sessions and complete the submission form contained in the booklet and return to Council.

Additionally, residents can comment on Council's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/greaterhumeshirecouncil>, email Council or telephone Freecall 1300 653 538 to speak to a Council staff regarding the proposal.

"Greater Hume Shire Council is committed to increasing its investment in the road network and believes a sustainable increase in rates is the appropriate course of action" concluded Mayor, Cr Heather Wilton.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

Cr Heather Wilton	Mayor	M: 0400 989 238
Steven Pinnuck	General Manager	M: 0429 310 205

## **Community survey to assist Council in its decisions to improve the road network**

### **Media Release**

*11 November 2014*

*For immediate release*

Council announced today that it has commissioned a community telephone survey to measure the level of community support for an increase in rates to fund improvements to the Shire's road network.

Independent market research company, IRIS Research, will survey residents regarding attitudes for Options 1 and 2 in Council's Community Engagement Guide – Options For Achieving A Better Road Network strategy booklet, distributed in early November to all residents. The survey is scheduled to commence from Wednesday, 12 November 2014.

Information on the proposed rate increase is available for viewing or downloading via Council's website (including an online rates calculator), or from any Council office, or library.

"Council is very keen to receive feedback from its residents and ratepayers regarding the proposal and so if a member of the community is contacted by Iris Research, I urge you to participate and provide us your thoughts about the proposal", said Mayor, Councillor Heather Wilton.

Earlier in 2012, a large scale community survey identified that maintenance of sealed and unsealed rural roads and town streets were three of the five top activities where Council's services were not meeting community expectations.

As a consequence, Council has actively considered its options for a Special Rate Variation, which would result in an increase in rating above the normal rate peg increase as set each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Broadly, the proposal is that properties with the average valuation within each rating category will pay an additional amount of approximately \$50 above rate pegging each year for three years. The special rate variation will apply to rates for three years commencing 1 July 2015 with the additional revenue retained permanently in Council's rate base from the 2017/2018 financial year.

Earlier Mayor of Greater Hume Shire Council, Cr Heather Wilton said, "We understand that rate increases of any kind are never welcomed, however, it is Council's view that a sustainable and affordable increase in rates is essential if Council is to meet the needs and expectations of the community across a range of services".

Council is proposing two options for residents to consider:

**Option 1 – a sustainable increase in rates for asset renewal and improved service levels including the Special Rate Variation**

or

**Option 2 – no rate increase above rate peg, which could potentially result in a decline in services to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of roads in the shire.**

Other consultation with the community includes community information sessions to be held later in November across the shire, where residents can in person talk to councillors and staff regarding the proposal.

Importantly, during the community consultation phase, Council is seeking feedback from its residents and ratepayers about the proposal.

Although only some of Council's residents will be contacted during the survey, all residents can provide Council with their feedback on the proposal, via the Submission Form in the booklet, in writing, or via email. Additionally, residents can comment on Council's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/greaterhumeshirecouncil>, or telephone Freecall 1300 653 538 to speak to a Council staff member regarding the proposal.

"Greater Hume Shire Council is committed to increasing its investment in the road network and believes a sustainable increase in rates is the appropriate course of action" earlier concluded Mayor, Cr Heather Wilton.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

Cr Heather Wilton	Mayor	M: 0400 989 238
Steven Pinnuck	General Manager	M: 0429 310 205

## Community consultation sessions assist Council to explain its options to improve the road network

### Media Release

*For immediate release*

Council's community consultation sessions commence tomorrow to assist residents to better understand the Community Engagement Guide – Options For Achieving A Better Road Network strategy, announced earlier this month.

"Residents can attend information sessions tomorrow and Friday and talk to councillors and Council staff about the proposal. I encourage residents to take the opportunity to come and talk to us about the proposal because it is important that we understand the views of all residents and ratepayers" said Mayor, Cr Heather Wilton.

Information sessions this week will be held:

Jindera	Thursday, 20 November	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Outside IGA supermarket
Holbrook	Friday, 21 November	9.30am – 11.00am	Adjacent to newsagency
Culcairn	Friday, 21 November	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Outside Council's office

Additional information sessions will be held next week also, at Henty and Walla Walla.

"For those unable to participate in the community consultation sessions, they can still visit a Council office to view the proposal, or make an appointment to talk to a member of staff, who will endeavour to answer any and all questions regarding the proposal" , said Cr Wilton.

"Alternatively, residents can access information via our website, where they can read about the proposal and calculate the impact of the special rate variation based on their own rates notice" added Cr Wilton.

Council has created a comprehensive page on its website for the proposal, which viewers can simply access via Council's home page at [www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au](http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au)

Earlier in 2012, a large scale community survey identified that maintenance of sealed and unsealed rural roads and town streets were three of the five top activities where Council's services were not meeting community expectations.

As a consequence, Council has actively considered its options for a Special Rate Variation, which would result in an increase in rating above the normal rate peg increase as set each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Broadly, the proposal is that properties with the average valuation within each rating category will pay an additional amount of approximately \$50 above rate pegging in Year 1. The special

rate variation will apply to rates for three years commencing 1 July 2015 but will be retained permanently in Council's rate base from the 2017/2018 financial year.

Earlier Mayor of Greater Hume Shire Council, Cr Heather Wilton said,  
"We understand that rate increases of any kind are never welcomed, however, it is Council's view that a sustainable and affordable increase in rates is essential if Council is to meet the needs and expectations of the community across a range of services".

Council is proposing two options for residents to consider:

**Option 1 – a sustainable increase in rates for asset renewal and improved service levels including the Special Rate Variation**

or

**Option 2 – no rate increase above rate peg, which could potentially result in a decline in services to adequately fund the maintenance and renewal of roads in the shire.**

Importantly, during the community consultation phase, Council is seeking feedback from its residents and ratepayers about the proposal. The consultation phase will conclude on 5 December 2014.

All residents can provide Council with their feedback for the proposal, via the Submission Form in the booklet previously distributed to all households, in writing, or via email. Additionally, residents can comment on Council's Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/greaterhumeshirecouncil>, or telephone Freecall 1300 653 538 to speak to a Council staff member regarding the proposal.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

Cr Heather Wilton	Mayor	M: 0400 989 238
Steven Pinnuck	General Manager	M: 0429 310 205

## **More community consultation sessions assist Council to explain its options to improve the road network**

### **Media Release**

*For immediate release*

27 November 2014

Council's community consultation sessions continue from tomorrow to assist residents to better understand the Community Engagement Guide – Options For Achieving A Better Road Network strategy, announced earlier this month.

"Residents can attend information sessions in Henty tomorrow morning and Walla Walla tomorrow afternoon where they can talk to councillors and Council staff about the proposal. I encourage residents to take the opportunity to come and talk to us about the proposal because it is important that we understand the views of all residents and ratepayers" said Mayor, Cr Heather Wilton.

Information sessions this week will be held:

Henty	Friday 28 November	9.30am – 11.00am	Outside Henty Library
Walla Walla	Friday 28 November	2.00pm – 4.00pm	Outside Post Office

"For those unable to participate in the community consultation sessions, they can still visit a Council office to view the proposal, or make an appointment to talk to a member of staff, who will endeavour to answer any and all questions regarding the proposal", said Cr Wilton.

"Alternatively, residents can access information via our website, where they can read about the proposal and calculate the impact of the special rate variation based on their own rates notice", added Cr Wilton.

Council has created a comprehensive page on its website for the proposal, which viewers can simply access via Council's home page at [www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au](http://www.greaterhume.nsw.gov.au)

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As a consequence, Council has actively considered its options for a Special Rate Variation, which would result in an increase in rating above the normal rate peg increase as set each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Broadly, the proposal is that properties with the average valuation within each rating category will pay an additional amount of approximately \$50 above rate pegging in Year 1. The special

rate variation will apply to rates for three years commencing 1 July 2015 but will be retained permanently from the 2017/2018 financial year.

Earlier Mayor of Greater Hume Shire Council, Cr Heather Wilton said,  
"We understand that rate increases of any kind are never welcomed, however, it is Council's view that a sustainable and affordable increase in rates is essential if Council is to meet the needs and expectations of the community across a range of services".

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Ends.

For further information please contact:

Cr Heather Wilton	Mayor	M: 0400 989 238
Steven Pinnuck	General Manager	M: 0429 310 205



## Extended public consultation period for Special Rate Variation proposal

### Media Release

*For immediate release*

Wednesday, 10 December 2014

Greater Hume Shire Council announced today that due to the high level of community interest the period that Council will receive submissions has been extended.

"Due to a high level of community response, Greater Hume Shire Council has extended the public consultation period for its proposal "Options For Achieving A Better Road Network – A Proposal for a Special Rate Variation" said General Manager, Steven Pinnuck.

"I would like to thank those many ratepayers and residents who have taken the time to already respond, and encourage those that would like to express their views, Council will receive submissions now until 24 December 2014," added Mr Pinnuck.

In November 2013 Greater Hume Shire Council resolved to advise IPART that subject to community consultation, it was intending to seek a Special Rate Variation (SRV) above rate pegging. If approved the SRV will commence 1 July 2015, and apply to all ratepayers in the shire for a period of three years and then be retained permanently in Council's rate base from 2017/2018 financial year.

Mr Pinnuck added that following public consultation, Council will receive a detailed report on the proposal at its next monthly meeting scheduled for 11 February 2015 at Culcairn.

Submission forms are available on Council's website, alternatively submissions can be emailed to [mail@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au) or write to Council, P O Box 99, Holbrook.

Ends.

For further information please contact:

Steven Pinnuck	General Manager	M: 0429 310 205
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