



Special Rate Variation

Community Feedback

**Stage 1 Fit for the Future Options
– May 2015**

**Stage 2 Preferred Special Rate Variation
- November/December 2015**

STAGE 1

**Fit for the Future
Options**

May 2015

STAGE 1 - SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED DURING PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE FIT FOR THE FUTURE OPTIONS PAPER IN MAY 2015

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
1		Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the best opportunity to achieve sustainability into the future and avoid or delay amalgamation Hopes the rate increase will result in an improved level of maintenance of Marked Tree Rd reflecting the contribution of rate payers living there and the significant increase in the volume of traffic
2		Bowning	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about the impact of limiting timber bridge loads on farm businesses, no other FFTF comments
3		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Councils should lobby against the practice of rate pegging Critical of Council's previous unwillingness to set rates at the appropriate level for sustainability Council should explore alternative means of raising revenue eg accelerate the growth of population in urban areas, provision of additional services to the community as fee for service (renewable energy, NBN, Smart Work Hub)
4		Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate increase between Scenarios 1 and 2 is too much. Suggests a more gradual approach.
5		Wallaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the rating formulae to address concerns of fairness and user pays. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek approval from the state govt to raise total rates by an amount equivalent to \$150 per ratepayer Increase the base rate by \$150 for every ratepayer who's rates include a base rate Increase minimum rates where applicable by \$150 and increase the ad valorem rate so that the total rates from this group increases by an amount equal to \$150 x no of such ratepayers Undertake the promised service review, rating review, land asset review and energy audit Prospective new expenditures must be worthwhile and cost effective and existing activities must be scrutinised in relation to efficiency and priority (service review)
6		Spring Range	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings should be identified through an external review Paid parking should be considered in Yass – user pays
7		Bowning	Scenario 2 or 3 (subject to comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council should provide a commitment to how and when it would (summarised): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver on the service review, rating review, land asset review and energy audit improve stakeholder engagement re bridges and roads regularly inform the community of progress on the backlog quantify a continuous improvement commitment demonstrate how the increased revenue would be used more effectively provide more information on revenue and works relevant to each geographic area lobby the state govt to get the ACT to rebalance income collected from ACT commercial buildings where Yass Valley residents are employed against such things as schooling provided by the ACT to Yass Valley kids review the hardship policy improve community understanding of Council processes and finances through more engagement more frequent meetings in villages (quarterly) identify how Council will be held to account for completing the above.
8		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premature to suggest rate increase before efficiencies are identified Farmers should be afforded leniency in regard to their share of the rate contribution Sale of assets is premature and too defensive

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some improvements in infrastructure in Scenario 3 should be tied to future developments to access developer contributions Limited growth prospects for business will impact on ability for business to pay higher rates
9		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rate system based on property value is inequitable, farmers are subsidising those who live in town Council should get government grants to fix the bridges Concerned they will be forced off their property if rates increase – special consideration should be given
10		Sutton	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options Paper is an excellent overview of the issues facing Council and options for the future
11		Wallaroo	Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for efficiencies rather than make budget cuts Generate more income by charging ACT rates and a road maintenance levy to those who are buying rural property and starting business to escape paying higher rates in the ACT
12		Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission does not provide any comment on the options, only on additional information that could be included in the final FFTF submission
13		Murrumbateman	Rejects all scenarios	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would have preferred an option of scenarios 2 and/or 3 without the rate increase Council has lost money in risky investments so should not ask ratepayers for more money Council should “shoulder the onus of their own budget recovery”
14		Wee Jasper	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenario 3 is a bit of a shock Council should not be investing in land, esp. if borrowing while there is a backlog in maintenance and infrastructure work Performance standards focussing on client service should be in place and communicated to the community Support the productivity and efficiency improvements detailed in the Options Paper. Community consultation should continue
15		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find efficiencies through regional procurement with other Councils while still remaining separate entities
16		Binalong	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports a rate increase for the upgrade of facilities and infrastructure, but not maintenance
17		Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not want an increase in rates to fund council employment and non-essential services Concern re disproportionate provision of services to Yass at the expense of the rural community Rewrite Scenario 1 to list specific reductions in Council expenses, council employment and services which are less than essential.
18		Wee Jasper	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased rates does not equal financial sustainability for Council as it subjects ratepayers to more pressure Essential services should be the prime target for Council focus Council should look to solutions that do not include increasing rates Efficient implementation of all operations is a high priority, not property speculation and opportunistic investment of ratepayers funds
19		Yass	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further review of Council’s expenses and income should be undertaken to achieve more savings, make Council more productive and achieve a balanced budget
20		Murrumbateman	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only responsible course for Council, to do otherwise would be reckless and not in the best interests of the community This is not about short term individual or collective popularity but sustainability and our future
21		Wallaroo	Scenario 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scenario 1 is not an option if Yass Valley is to survive as a single entity, Scenario 3 is not affordable Review of rating system is important to ensure equity

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
22		Sutton	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Premature to suggest rate increase before service reviews and new LG Act • Review what services Council provides that should be state and federal responsibilities • Council should live within its means • Favours one off contribution of \$50-\$150 per ratepayer to allow service reviews
23		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't seem to be a system to ensure the maintenance backlog does accumulate again once caught up • Concerns about affordability re elderly and young families • Assess where things have gone wrong and create systems to prevent them being repeated rather than raising rates for less services
24		Murrumbateman	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismay at proposed increase to rates
25		Gundaroo	Scenario 3 (subject to comments)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports increases in rates to support a properly evaluated program of works benefitting the community • Would like to see more information published on the criteria used to classify roads into the 5 road categories used for maintenance scheduling to ensure that any rate increase provides good value for rural ratepayers.
26		Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support amalgamation • Would also like a sliding scale considered to reduce the value of the increase for rural land holders esp of > 80ha
27		Marchmont	Somewhere between Scenarios 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not favour any consideration of a merger • Questions the viability of continuing to service Gundaroo and Sutton and boundary realignment with Upper Lachlan and/or Palerang should be looked at • Suggests increasing rates by 5-6% pa for 8-10 years
28		Murrumbateman	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best option to take Council forward and begin making improvements • Council should also critically examine operating costs • Council should examine its assets to determine whether they would be better held or disposed of
29		Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opposes any amalgamation • Efficiencies must be sought in all areas and attention paid to administration, IT and nebulous operations which do not provide benefits to ratepayers must not be undertaken
30		Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not support any rate increases • Concerns about how the additional rates would be spent • Wants to see a submission showing how Council will initiate efficiency measures, reduce waste, reset priorities and achievable targets making it FFTF by better management
31		Binalong	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oppose rate increases • Council should look at efficiencies, review all programs, introduce TQM, best practice and performance targets and utilise staff entrepreneurial skills
32		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-funded retiree – he must change the way he does things to fit within his income, Council should do the same
33		Gundaroo	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate pegging has set up local councils to fail. • Rate pegging and the additional demands of State and Federal legislation have hampered Council's ability to manage its affairs sustainably and led to the slow attrition of resources • Council needs to be properly resourced • Alternative would result in "economic stagnation, further amalgamations and the death of small vibrant communities like Gundaroo"

#	NAME	LOCATION	PREFERRED SCENARIO	KEY COMMENTS
34		Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned that Council is treating everyone in Yass Valley equally when provision of services is not equal Base rate increases on a user pays system Increase rates for rural residential and residential by 7%, leave anyone on 100 acres + on the rate peg Road trains – impose limits, make users purchase a permit or apply a levy Levy more developer charges on new subdivisions
35		Binalong	Scenario 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service review is fundamental
36		Murrumbateman	Scenario 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main reason for not supporting other scenarios is no detail on accountability to ensure revenue raised will be used on assets Looking for an element of proportionality between revenue raising and cost savings Merging is a viable option - Council 's desire for self-preservation should not outweigh the benefits of a merger
37		Gundaroo	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not support rate increases Council has publicly focussed on financial sustainability, not the other required criteria No other income generating options such as business development or sale of assets(??) have been considered and Council has declared there is limited scope for efficiencies Doubts Council's Capacity to effectively manage infrastructure and service delivery across the LGA Council is ineffective in managing funds, infrastructure and maintenance programs Further tendering and outsourcing should be considered
38		Murrumbateman	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council structure is too top heavy for its size Council should reduce staff salaries eg share senior roles with other Councils Discourage development on unsealed roads to reduce need for maintenance Rezoned to encourage more development near ACT border Increase tourism activities Amalgamate with Palerang and Queanbeyan ACT Govt should contribute to Council revenues
39		Yass	Not stated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No to any rate rise and proposes a \$100 one off levy Council wastes money and is not transparent (summarised)

Note: Where submissions included feedback on issues other than FFTF, only FFTF has been included above

STAGE 1 - FEEDBACK FROM YASS AND MURRUMBATEMAN MARKETS DURING PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE FIT FOR THE FUTURE OPTIONS PAPER

LOCATION	STAFF	NO OF COMMUNITY ATTENDEES	KEY COMMENTS
Yass Farmers Markets	David Rowe General Manager Sheri Norton Director Corporate and Community	41	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people who approached the stand (50%+) had some knowledge of Fit for the Future, primarily from the mailout to all ratepayers 3 people were strongly opposed to a rate increase for any reason A number of people wanted to ask questions, listened to our explanation of the options and said they would take the full Options Paper away to consider it
Murrumbateman Farmers Markets	David Rowe General Manager Sheri Norton Director Corporate and Community	42	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many were supportive of the need for a rate rise as long as it was for specific infrastructure maintenance and improvements A number were aware of rate pegging and the impact on Council A significant proportion said that they understood the need for an increase in rates and they were happy to pay for it as long as services were maintained and improved A number of people we spoke to had moved to the area in the past 12 months and commented that our rates were lower than they had expected

STAGE 1 - FIT FOR THE FUTURE YASS VALLEY CONNECT FORUMS

LOCATION	NO OF ATTENDEES (incl. CWG)	IN ATTENDANCE		
		COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP	EXECUTIVE	COUNCILLORS
GUNDAROO Tuesday 12 May 2015	29	Mike Gilligan	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess David Needham Greg Butler Geoff Frost Jasmin Jones
YASS Wednesday 13 May 2015	25	Touie Smith Brian Millett Bernie Johnson	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost
MURRUMBATEMAN Thursday 14 May 2015	32	Briony Barac Mike Gilligan Sarah McClintock Jackie Wilson Margaret Head Anthony Reid Chris Smith	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost
WEE JASPER Monday 18 May 2015	19	Mike Carey Ian Longley	David Rowe Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Geoff Frost
BOOKHAM Tuesday 19 May 2015	12	Elizabeth Goodfellow Touie Smith Hansie Armour	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Geoff Frost
WALLAROO 20 May 2015	15	Nil	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Geoff Frost
BINALONG Thursday 21 May 2015	20	Touie Smith Libby Elliott	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Geoff Frost
BOWNING Tuesday 26 May 2015	34	John Carr Elizabeth Goodfellow Touie Smith Kathleen Brigdale Connie Elliott	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler Ann Daniel Geoff Frost Jasmin Jones - part only
SUTTON Thursday 28 May 2015	12	Elizabeth Goodfellow	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Cec Burgess Greg Butler David Needham
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STAGE 2

Preferred Special Rate Variation

Nov/Dec 2015

STAGE 2 - SUMMARY OF WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED DURING PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE REVISED DELIVERY PROGRAM AND LTFF IN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015

#	NAME	LOCATION	KEY COMMENTS RELATED TO SRV
1		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not supportive of rate increase Preference is to cut costs rather than raise rates
2		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the need for the SRV Would like to see more funds spent in Sutton Questions the proposed expenditure on equestrian facilities Would like to see program for development of recreational trails
3		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to see more funds being spent in the village with consideration for footpaths and kerb and gutter
4		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers unable to withstand further rate increases Weeds are not being maintained to a satisfactory level. Suggests a change to rating system allowing farmers the option of a lower level of rates while they 'farm' with 'back rating' applied if the property is subdivided
5		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few services provided by council for the rates paid Does not support SRV Believes that savings can be achieved that would obviate the need for the SRV
6		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not supportive of SRV due to the magnitude of the increase Not satisfied Council has done enough to find savings and be more efficient Failure to mention incentives for amalgamation in the community consultation Council has not presented all sides of the argument regarding amalgamation and 'standalone' options
7		Yass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In agreement with Council's position to 'standalone' Council should exercise greater control over its costs, eliminate waste, prioritise service delivery and improve productivity Some identified projects could be deferred and some reconsidered or scrapped. Suggests Murrumbateman sewer and water users bear full cost of the schemes Suggest there needs to be a focus on efficiency including the use of external resources
8		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No objection to SRV if the community benefits Suggesting further consultation prior to locking in proposed improvement programs for Sutton
9		Yass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objects to SRV Suggest amalgamation should happen as soon as possible Believe Council is not transparent in decision making and decisions work to the detriment of many ratepayers
10		Walleroo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objection to SRV - pro amalgamation inferring that amalgamations will create significant administration savings
11		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too high a proportion of rates revenue being spent on staff salaries that would be better spent on infrastructure maintenance, pro amalgamation
13		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No justification for rate increase Suggest services should be cut to reduce costs rather than increase rates
14		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concern over how rate rise will be sustainable/affordable for residents Rate rise should be kept in line with CPI
15		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No justification for rate increase, favours merger

#	NAME	LOCATION	KEY COMMENTS RELATED TO SRV
16		Yass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a pensioner, raises concern that households will not be able to sustain the proposed rate increase due to the many other increases in household expenses
17		Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objection to SRV – negligible services for rates currently paid Questions the system of rating Would like to see the cost of local government reduced and service delivery move to user payers More impact on Sutton/Wallaroo ratepayers than Yass Town ratepayers
18		Wallaroo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports Council remaining a standalone Council and the proposed SRV
19		Murrumbateman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would like to maintain the status quo at no cost Would like further detailed analysis of options for amalgamation to be presented to the community given that there should be economies of scale with larger councils
20		Binalong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider merger with Boorowa and/or Harden Councils to mitigate against the need for increasing rates All cost savings need to be explored prior to any SRV
21		Wee Jasper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local community association expressing its desire that Yass Valley Council remains a standalone Council

STAGE 2 – SPECIAL RATE VARIATION YASS VALLEY CONNECT FORUMS

LOCATION	DATE	NO OF ATTENDEES	EXECUTIVE	COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE
BOOKHAM	Tuesday 24 November 2015	12	David Rowe Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Geoff Frost
SUTTON	Thursday 26 November 2015	12	David Rowe Chris Berry	Rowena Abbey, Mayor David Needham
WEE JASPER	Monday 30 November 2015	17	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Geoff Frost
BINALONG	Tuesday 1 December 2015	6	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton Gary Chapman	Michael McManus Greg Butler
GUNDAROO	Wednesday 2 December 2015	21	David Rowe Gary Chapman	Michael McManus Cec Burgess David Needham Greg Butler
YASS	Thursday 3 December 2015	43	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor
BOWNING	Monday 7 December 2015	6	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Ann Daniel Geoff Frost Jasmin Jones
WALLAROO	Thursday 8 December 2015	5	David Rowe Chris Berry Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor David Needham Greg Butler Geoff Frost
MURRUMBATEMAN	Thursday 10 December 2015	46	David Rowe Chris Berry Sheri Norton Gary Chapman	Rowena Abbey, Mayor Michael McManus David Needham Greg Butler Geoff Frost
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