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Submission: My family and I have lived in Port Stephens for more than 50 years. My parents built a retirement home on the waterfront at Corlette. As waterfront blocks became scarce the values went through the roof and the UCV on the blocks skyrocketed. My parents who were on a limited income could no afford the council rates and were forced to sell. I may now be facing the same senario. I built my retirement home at Boat Harbour and being on a pension have limited income to support my modest lifestyle. My rates have steadily increased over the years which I have been able to cover. An eventual near doubling of my rates would be a severe impost on my finances and remaining at my current property would become questionable.

I attended the Council Consultation Meeting in my ward and was dismayed at the Councils proposals. The view for the future appeared to focus on the Council creating a 'tourist mecca' rather than providing quality services for the rate payers of our area. We live here 24/7 365 days of the year and OUR needs should be the Council's main priority rather than transient visitors to our area.

When asked about the Pensioner Rate Rebate remaining the same as it was when introduced many years ago and is now a significantly smaller percentage of rates, the Council representatives were unsatisfactorily non committal.

I do not want to end up like my parents and being forced to sell my retirement home due to financial necessity.

I have to live within my financial means and Port Stephens Council should do the same.

I do not support Port Stephens Council's current application for additional rateincreases.