

**From:** Ann-Maree Milne [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 12 February 2019 8:56 AM  
**To:** IPART <ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Port Stephens Council rate increase proposal

Dear IPART

I wish to register that I object to Port Stephens Council's ridiculous proposal to increase rates by 7.5% per year for the next 7 years.

I along with many thousands of other Port Stephens residents object this ridiculous outrageous proposal.

Thousands of Port Stephens residents signed online and paper petitions objecting to this ridiculous proposal. Many people made their voices heard & Council ignored every single objection.

The majority of residents and Local Businesses are against the proposal.

Awareness in the area about Council developments and plans are poor. This lack of awareness has been fuelled by Council changing amounts of money being allocated to projects, between when this proposal first went out to public submission and what has been submitted to IPART.

The changes include \$25 million less over 10 years for roads. Port Stephens Council needs to stop wasting money and fix the terrible roads we have. We are a very very busy holiday destination that brings in millions of dollars in revenue each year yet the state of our roads are appalling.

Perhaps the 30% minority of people who are the rich people that live and have holiday homes in the area that indicated a willingness for a rate rise in the first round of consultation may have opted for no increase if they had seen the more recent proposal from Council.

There is no evidence that any projects proposed by Council are needs, rather they appear as wants by the Council. None of the proposed projects are essential for Council to continue to operate.

Council in recent years has demonstrated capacity to fund large scale projects without the need for a rate increase.

Port Stephens Council is completely unrealistic in proposing that people except for the rich can afford for a 7.5% rate increase each year for the next 7 years. We are already paying high enough rates and not seeing any improvements done in the area by Port Stephens Council. The new Mayor was voted in on his promise to the community and not to waste money and propose to increase rates by an unrealistic amount.

Port Stephens Council has ignored residents, and I ask that you please listen to us when we say ... this rate rise is unnecessary, unaffordable, and will cause extreme hardship for many. I along with many others ask that you reject this application outright.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

**Ann-Maree Milne**

