

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Government Mailbox](#)
Subject: Fw: Special Rate Variation Port Stephens Council. Objection to Proposal.
Date: Monday, 11 March 2019 5:04:50 PM

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 11 March 2019 4:55 PM
To: localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov
Subject: Special Rate Variation Port Stephens Council. Objection to Proposal.

My name is [REDACTED]. I am a Ratepayer Resident of Port Stephens, I am making an Individual submission to you regarding the above.

I want my name kept Confidential, however, i do not object to my submission without my name, being posted on your Website

I state, that I strongly object to the Rate Variation Proposed by Council. I believe the proposal is manifestly unaffordable .

Council is proposing an increase of 7.5% per annum which is a proposed Cumulative increase , of around 66%after 7 years.

Council then proposes that the increase is permanent ,and no doubt will be subject to further ongoing Annual Increases.

I have paid Rates to the Council for nearly 40 years on multiple properties, i live here permanently,based on my affordability to do so.

I initially chose Port Stephens to reside in, based on its affordability ,location, village and Community structure and the Facilities ,Goods,

Infrastructure including Roads and General Services offered by Port Stephens Council, and other Authorities.

I am pleased to say that I am generally satisfied with the above, and in particular with the Port Stephens Council to this point in time.

I have always contributed to the Community, and now find that I, and the absolute vast majority of eligible voters, are extremely disappointed that our elected Council

members have failed to listen to the majority that refute Councils proposal, and proceed to submit the Rate Variation as described, to IPART.

I feel that after around 84% of written submissions(council statistics) reject the proposal. This figure has then been reported to be reduced to around 74% by Council attempting to lower the figure by commissioning telephone, and face to face Surveys(are they not illegal?)if not they should be. I personally resent persons telephoning

in any form of survey, i regard it as an imposition of my privacy, same goes in the street.

In any event, the true figure of those including me who oppose the Variation proposal represent 84%, at least, against it. I have not personally met a person who talks in favour of it, although I don't canvass like Council does.

I have been canvassed by Council in written Surveys for a number of years regarding Performance ,Service, Suggestions etc...Council proudly announces the service rate of Acceptance to be in excess of 90% . More recently Council announced its Award of THE BEST COUNCIL IN N.S.W.....HELLO!!!!..... but now we want to Massively increase your Rates.

I am on a fixed income, subject to an Annual CPI increase, as no doubt many others are. How will we pay the increase? when so many other costs are crippling our ability to survive. This Increase will affect all in the Community ,single income families, double income families, welfare recipients, renters and those that are unfortunate to have nothing to fall back on financially. Nothing much has been said about the Pensioners. Sure Rate payments can be deferred, subject to approval and high interest,all of which needs to be paid on disposal of the Levied property. The Rate Concession currently in force is statute by the Govt and no doubt remains fixed, A small service, or garbage collection reduction to pensioners was mentioned, (possibly fixed at about \$100 per annum, but in the Grand Scheme of the proposed Massive Rate Increase ,it never got much discussion or explanation.

As previously stated, Council has presented its case to the People, they have tried beyond belief, to strategically put up a pro case, and even allowing for Council receiving a massive Rebuff from the People on every occasion , they have voted in the majority ,to support the Increase. This decision has never been an Election issue, the Council is not Broke, there is scope for further avenues to raise funds, among them, Selling Assets, Loans, Contribution by Business Owners and Tourist Operators to assist funding Town Streetscapes and Land facilities for visiting Tourists, this segment of the Community benefit from Tourism, particularly in Nelson Bay.

Finally, i note that the Sitting Member and Candidate (upcoming State Election 23/3/19) for Port Stephens Kate Washington, rejects Councils proposal out of hand, on the basis of what the Ports Constituents are telling her, they simply cannot afford it . I note in the initial vote of Council that only 2 Councillors voted against the Proposal to increase the Rates through the Variation, however,on the second and most recent vote for the proposed increase, a third 3rd Councillor, a declared independent, changed her mind.

The reason quoted was that the independent on Council, who is now standing as the Endorsed Candidate for the Liberal Party at the Upcoming State Election(23 March,2019) has stated that the overwhelming number of Electors have told her the increase is unjustified and unaffordable.

I thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.