

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 16 March 2017 11:12 AM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: Shoalhaven Council...Special Rate Variation Application

Although now outside the official deadline for submission, we would like to record our objection to the special rate variation being sought by Shoalhaven Council. We object on the following grounds;

1. Council is seeking approval to increase rates by 11.5% , an increase in the order of 800% above the rate peg of 1.5%, in each of the next two years, creating a rate increase for ratepayers of 13% in both the 2017/18 and 2018/19 years. The effective cumulative increase is in the order of 30%, and would remain in the rate base on an ongoing basis after 2018/19. This dramatic increase in rates is unconscionable, and possibly unaffordable for many Shoalhaven ratepayers.
2. It seems that there are no significant new infrastructure projects identified by Council to justify the increase being sought. The main argument seems to be that Council needs more money to continue to maintain existing infrastructure.
3. The increasing population of the Shoalhaven , with many new homes being built , must in itself be generating additional rate income
4. Council should operate within it's means, and if necessary, prioritise and ensure ratepayers obtain better value for expenditure.
5. The official rate peg is presumably established with good reason , based on sound economic data , to provide Councils with the opportunity to adjust rates in line with the LGCI to allow for wages and other cost increases. If any rate increase above the rate peg is approved for the Shoalhaven , that increase should be reduced to a more realistic inflation -related and appropriate percentage, and be spread over 4 rating years.
6. There must be other ways to increase Council income. Has Council fully considered alternatives?
7. The proposed increase is indeed opposed by some of the Shoalhaven councillors.

We confirm that we are individuals, have read IPART's submission policy, and that we prefer our submission to be anonymous (names / address not to be published)

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]