

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, 15 February 2019 6:50 PM

To: Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Port Stephens Council, Special Variation Application

Please see my submission below;

To IPART

Port Stephens Council is seeking IPART's approval to increasing the residential property rates by 7.5% in the year 2019-2020 and by a further 7.5% in each of the following six years.

I am an Age Pensioner and I rent a ground floor 2 bedroom unit from the Dep't. of Family and Community Services (FACS), which leases that unit from the owner under an arrangement called a 'Head Lease'. My rent is calculated as 25% of my income, which is the Age Pension, and there is no direct relationship between the rent I pay and what FACS pay to the unit owner.

My FACS Liaison Officer visited me last week, and advised me that FACS have recently lost a number of Head Lease units that were due for renewal and she surmised that the main reason would have been that FACS were not offering the owners an increase in rent that acknowledged the Council's proposed compounding 7.5% annual increases in property rates. The Head Lease, for my unit, is due for renewal on 3rd of June this

year and she saw it as extremely likely that, as has happened with those other Head Leases, it would not be renewed by the owner.

My Liaison Officer suggested that I consider moving into one of two units that are owned by FACS and are currently vacant. I was offered those units, some 5 years ago, before I was offered my present unit. I had then refused those two other units, because they were extremely small, had only one bedroom and were only accessible by stairs.

I am 87, and I have cardiac and respiratory illnesses. Both of which mean that climbing a staircase represents a serious risk for me. I am also extremely likely to need a 'live in' carer, within the near future, which means that I must have a second bedroom. As an Age Pensioner, I cannot afford the charges being asked for accommodation in any of the local Age Care establishments.

From my involvement in a local OM:NI (Older Men : New Ideas) group, I am also aware that there are a number of other Older Men in this locality, who are in a position similar to mine. But I have been unable to persuade them to make a submission to IPART, on this issue.

So, I wish to submit, to IPART, that Port Stephens Council's proposal to increase residential property rates, by a compounding 7.5% each year, will be extremely detrimental to the well-being of myself and many other Age Pensioners who live in the Port Stephens Council region.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]