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Submission: The reasoning and consultation about the rate rise have been both inadequate, to impose such major increases on a local population many of whom have limited capacity to pay consultation should have been much wider than it was. The vast majority would have known nothing about it till after the application was made to IPART.

Most people who are working long hours and often commuting long distances to pay mortgages and raise families don't have time to closely follow any politics let alone local government. Using rate payers money to fund a consultant company to survey a select few handpicked locals with a carefully worded survey can achieve whatever result is desired by whoever engaged the consultants. These consultants were not doubt payed for their services with rate payer money to achieve such an outcome, but it does not reflect the view of the, majority of the community or rate payers.

One of the main justifications given by the council for the increased rates is to revitalise the town centre after the completion of the Scone bypass. For many locals who oppose the bypass this is doubly offensive. In that we didn't want the bypass and now the supposed revitalisation we need as a result of it, we have to pay for, when the costings of the bypass and its associated planning should have included these impacts and seen them funded from state revenue not council.

Furthermore, the local businesses will have a big enough struggle to survive post bypass without the increased rates to pay for a revitalisation that is a consequence of another project which will no doubt close many of them down or significantly affect their revenue. Wrong time, and wrong reason for any special rate increases, by a council obviously out of touch.