

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 13 February 2019 12:58 PM

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

**Subject:** Special Rate Variation Port Stephens Council

To whom it may concern,

I have tried to send the information below via the Departments on line form but it appears to me that it hasn't or wont upload as on each attempt at uploading it requires a document and the confidentiality to be completed. I don't have a document and the appropriate box was ticked. I'm unsure whether this difficulty is deliberate but making an IPART submission is not as easy as it should be.

### Submission to IPART

I have lived in Port Stephens for over 40 years and have never witnessed anything as unprofessional or without foundation or proper consultation than the current application to IPART for a special rate variation. My rates are already over \$2000.00 per year with no storm water, no sewer, no kerb and gutter and no footpath. Apart from weekly rubbish removal, I have difficulty in understanding what service provided by this Council could remotely approach the current rate payment, let alone any increase. Yet I am expected to welcome an increase approaching 70% over the period of the SPV as great value when considering all the improvements proposed. Of even greater concern is that once the SRV ceases the 70% increase will continue forever! What happens to the continuation of this largess?

This Council has no track record of careful financial management and only 2 years ago when threatened with amalgamation went to great lengths to demonstrate its financial wellbeing and now we are to believe it requires a rate increase of 7.5% per annum to survive.

Council's submission is strong on so called community consultation. I have never been asked, seen a survey or have any knowledge of the fantasy list of projects, which in Council's words, "may be funded" from the rate variation but it is clear that there is no guarantee that anything other than business as usual" will be delivered.

There are no doubt projects within the list of merit but I cannot accept that a SPV is the only way funding can be obtained. Council have made no attempt to seek funds from various State and Federal funding sources. After a refusal proper planning, costing etc it may then , and only then, be appropriate to seek funds from ratepayers.

In summary I do not accept that proper consultation or preparation has been undertaken by Council. I am expected to fund what is in effect the Councillor's wish list with no certainty as to delivery. I am totally against the granting of a SPV to Port Stephens Council

Regards,

Bob Blackie

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