

[REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 14 February 2019 7:51 AM

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

**Subject:** Port Stephens Rate Rise Online Submission

**Greg Newman**

[REDACTED] **TANILBA BAY, NSW, 2319.**

Dear IPART

I wish to register that I object to Port Stephens Council's proposal to increase rates by 66% over 7 years.

Wages are stagnant and have not substantially increased in years. Interest rates remain low and the cost of living remains high including energy costs, the cost of fuel, insurances and consumer goods are increasing. I am one of many people finding it difficult to manage these costs for everyday needs.

I understand that over 70% of submissions to Council's proposal were against the increase. Thousands of residents have raised their objections to the proposed increase. Local businesses are against this proposal.

There appears to be confusion over what the proposed SRV funds will be used/allocated towards. There is speculation over the projects that council is planning over the coming years. I would expect that there should be a reasonably comprehensive plan provided by council to support the SRV application. From what I have read, council wants to allocate funds to 'catch up' on projects and outstanding works. This appears to be a management issue of past projects and not adequate justification for the SRV. If there are substantial future projects that council wishes to undertake, these projects have not been adequately communicated to constituents. As a result, these projects have not be supported by constituents because we don't know what they are. If these projects are deemed essential to council continuing to operate on behalf of the constituents of the LGA, then surely we should know what they are. Else, perhaps these projects simply constitute a wish list in tough times.

Council has, in recent years, demonstrated a reasonably sound capacity to fund large-scale projects without the need for a SRV increase. I appreciate that rate rises are required periodically to maintain services and standards. The degree of this rate rise is unnecessary, unaffordable, and will cause further hardship for many. I ask that you **reject** the Port Stephens Council SRV application.

Regards,  
Greg Newman.