

Author name: G. Truman

Date of submission: Saturday, 9 March 2019

Submission: The infrastructure backlog while significant, is by no means extraordinary compared to other local government areas in NSW. Yet the current generation of ratepayers is being asked to bear a 75% rate increase over 8 years to pay for a backlog that has taken at least 50 years to develop. Many ratepayers in the area are on fixed incomes and this concentrated burden will be inequitable for them. There was strong resistance from this electorate when merger with Newcastle was proposed by the State government in large part because we did not wish to join with a council which has proved it can spend more readily than build independent income and conserve its resources. This proposal will primarily serve developers who will see the opportunity for further land subdivision based on improved infrastructure at the expense of existing ratepayers. The backlog is acknowledged, but the increase should be spread over 15 rather than 8 years, with detailed five year reviews of achievements and priorities. Developers should also be required to make a greater contribution.