

**From:** Jon & Chris Erby [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, 10 March 2019 1:22 PM  
**To:** Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>  
**Subject:** Dungog Shire Council Special Variation Application

## OUR SUBMISSION

The current Dungog Council has made a submission for a Special Rate Increase of 97.8% over 7 years. Ratepayers have been given two choices (i) to support this increase (ii) stay with the status quo. A more modest increase of 15% over 2 yrs as proposed by 3 of 9 Councillors was not given as an option.

We purchased our first property on [REDACTED] in 1981. We now own additional properties in the Shire, [REDACTED]. We are permanent residents, live on the property, employ a full-time Manager who also lives on the property & an additional full-time employee. We farm the land & breed elite Angus beef cattle which we sell to other breeders and the abattoirs for meat. Since 2009 the rateable UCV of our properties has decreased by approx 30%, being due to the economic mismanagement of the Dungog Council, which has been deemed to be "Not Fit for the Future".

We cannot afford a rate increase of 97.8%, our farming business cannot support this additional cost. As a result of the current drought, the cattle industry is under enormous pressure; with the average herd reduction in NSW being some 30%, declining terms of trade and a collapsing market. We have had no farm generated income for the last six months while expenses due to the drought have been significantly higher than usual. Ratepayers are already having difficulty in paying the current rates & a further increased burden will see the whole community of the Shire collapse. Council's submission is totally irresponsible, increasing the rates by 98.7% won't solve its financial problems. Amalgamation with another council is the only long term solution.

Our main street has many empty shops, & despite rents having not increased in 10 years, it is difficult to find tenants, as rates and other expenses have increased significantly. We have no hardware store, Westpac has closed.

**WE VEHEMENTLY OPPOSE THE APPLICATION FOR A 97.8% RATE INCREASE**

...end of submission.....

We have read and accept IPART's Submission Policy, and are happy for our names and our submission to be published. We are not robots!

Yours faithfully

Jonathan & Christine Erby

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
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