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Submission: This proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) should be rejected on the following grounds.

1. The claimed impact is misleading and does not take into account future escalation in rates. This will lead to a higher imposition on land owners than claimed.
2. The objectives of the biodiversity strategy can be met with existing council resources and within the existing operational budget.
3. The SRV is discriminatory and unduly places a higher burden on 1 class of landowners (rural landowners). Under the proposed scheme farmers will be forced to pay a levy even though they may receive no benefit from the biodiversity strategy. In fact, the benefits are likely to be very limited and open to nepotism. A true biodiversity strategy would benefit the entire community. Therefore the cost of implementing a broad biodiversity strategy should be borne by all ratepayers, not just those with rural holdings. The council's decision to restrict the cost to rural rate payers whilst claiming the strategy has shire-wide benefits confirms the strategy is discriminatory and demonstrates how poorly conceived this proposal is.