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Submission: I object to Blue Mountains City Council increasing our rates. I'm struggling to pay rates now. An increase in rates of 40percent in 4 years will enforce me to pay over \$2,000.00 extra per year . Ill be paying over \$7,000.00 rates per year. With all the other bills and cost of living , I cannot afford to pay these rates. I do not want to have to sell my family heritage. My grandparents settled on this land at Blackheath in the late 1800s, before local council existed. We worked a market garden-orchard. My mother use to sell fresh fruit and vegetables at the back door of our house. In more recent times council rezoned our land from rural to residential, so that finished all that for us. People with money, but without the connection to country, or that place, buy and sell in the surrounding area, it's like a business to them, constantly increasing the land value, and thus increasing rates . I didn't ask for this. It's my home and family heritage, this property represents much more to me than the monetary value. I feel that something should be put in place to monitor the increase in rates to long term residents I currently pay nearly \$4,000.00 per year rates on this Blackheath property, I don't even have a house on the property, I also pay over \$1,300.00 rates on a Katoomba property. Rates at present, totalling over \$5,000.00. An increase of 40 percent in 4 years will mean I pay an extra \$2,000.00. I'll be paying \$7,000.00 per year rates. I can't afford to pay this. Council may not claim properties for unpaid rates, but I wonder how many owners have to sell their properties because they can't afford to pay the rates. You shouldn't have to sell your home, it's where your friends and family are, it's your existence. we are connected to tho place, it's home. To many of us, we enjoy a humble existence , and don't need council to waste our money in all it's extravagance and bureaucracy. It's as if only the rich are allowed to own land here and then govern our existence. This happens at so many levels world wide. The increase in rates will also increase rentals (especially in shops) and where rates are already high. The cost of living is also likely to rise.