

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Wednesday, 27 February 2019 12:01 PM

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

**Subject:** Rate rise objection for Port Stephens council

Dear IPART

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

As you are probably already aware, over 70% of submissions to Council's proposal were against the increase. Over 2,000 people made their voices heard. Council ignored every single one of these people. Thousands more locals have signed online and paper petitions. Local businesses are against this proposal.

There is, poor awareness about Council's proposed projects. This lack of awareness has been fuelled by Council changing amounts of money being allocated to projects, between when this proposal first went out for public submission, and what has been submitted to you.

This includes \$25million less over 10 years for roads. Perhaps the 30% of people who indicated a willingness for a rate rise in the first round of consultation may have opted for no increase had they seen the most recent proposal from Council.

There is no evidence that any of the projects proposed by Council are 'needs'.

Rather, they appear to be 'wants'. I agree that most of the projects would be nice to have, but none of them are essential to Council continuing to operate, they also dont seem to reflect our popultion demographics.

Council has, in recent years, demonstrated a sound capacity to fund large-scale projects without the need for a rate increase.

Wages are stagnant, power prices are soaring, and the cost of petrol, insurances, and consumer goods is only increasing. Cost of living is rising and as a single mother trying to live off a small wage, pay a mortgage and feed my children, I am one of many people who are already struggling. With an increase this high, I may be forced to sell my home. My home is a safe place for my children, and I hate knowing that a decision made by my council may determine this.

Port Stephens Council has ignored its residents, and I ask that you listen to us when we say: this rate rise is unnecessary, unaffordable, and will cause extreme hardship for many. I ask that you reject this application outright. I give permission for this submission to be made public if requires.

Regards Natalie Hollis [REDACTED]