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Your submission for this review:

Response to questions posed by IPART relating to the Hawkesbury Q1 If Sydney Water extends its wastewater services to the Hawkesbury City Council are in future, should those customers pay a separate wastewater charge, or should additional costs be shared across all customers? RESPONSE The cost of extending wastewater services to the Hawkesbury should be shared equally across all Sydney Water Customers. The spreading of charges across the Sydney Water customer base is fair as property developers currently have their costs subsidised by all Sydney Water customers. This has only just changed with developer contributions now capped at 25% in 2024-25 going to 50% in 2025-26. The above charges relate to property being developed for profit, rather than the approx. 8500 existing customers simply trying to manage their budgets and minimise bill impacts that they cannot control. Developers can afford a user pays situation, whereas ordinary people in the Hawkesbury cannot offset these costs as a cost of doing business or pass them onto a customer/property purchaser. With Sydney and its urban developments physically reaching the edge of the Hawkesbury, the area is now considered part of the metropolis. The Hawkesbury wastewater system is a legacy system and an anomaly in the Sydney basin. Sydney Water manages Wollongong, so cost parity for a Sydney Local Government area is sensible. The Hawkesbury River receives recycled water at various stages of the dam and river systems from a number of treatment facilities operated by Sydney Water, including the new The Upper South Creek Advanced Water Recycling Centre. Surely as the recipient of much of Sydneys wastewater, the Hawkesbury residents (who drink the water) and the River should also be under the stewardship of Sydney Water, and subject to the same sharing of costs across the customer base. Q2. Besides bill impacts, what other factors should we consider? RESPONSE It is very important for Sydney Water to take over Hawkesbury City Councils wastewater assets as soon as possible. Hawkesbury City Council is unable to efficiently manage its wastewater assets without intervention from Sydney Water and the NSW Government. Hawkesbury City Council has put its residents at a disadvantage over the last several years with issues relating to its wastewater services which have seen blowouts in the budget. This has compounded the lack of maintenance to the wastewater system. I note that Hawkesbury City Council has not published an Annual Report on its website since 2022/23, and there has been no published Financial Statement since 2021, so I am unable to provide details of the cost overruns in this submission. Hawkesbury City Council has a recent history in being unable to effectively and prudently manage its contractors in it its Windsor Liveability projects or its Western Sydney Infrastructure Grants project money. I do not have confidence in the Councils ability to manage something so environmentally sensitive. Wastewater is a critical service, made even more critical by the proximity of the aging Hawkesbury Wastewater systems proximity to the Hawkesbury River and the potential for environmental issues.