



██████████
Nelson Bay NSW 2315
████████████████████

13TH February 2019

IPART

Po Box K 35

Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240

Dear Sir /Madam

Proposed introduction of a Special rate Variation [SRV] for Port Stephens

Is Port Stephens rapidly becoming a “**dormitory**” suburb of Newcastle – if so, is that what we truly want?

In my view we should be striving to become a strong independent economy providing economic and jobs growth and appropriate Tertiary Education and innovation to ensure we have a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the Port Stephens community. The Special Rate Variation [SRV] is an opportunity to provide the necessary infrastructure to make this happen.

It is clear that Port Stephens has been falling behind in providing appropriate and adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of a growing community particularly for Services, Sporting, Tertiary Education, Innovation, Jobs growth, infrastructure and strong appealing Town Centres. In fact, the LGA has had strong residential growth over many years and the required infrastructure has simply not kept pace.

Port Stephens Council has now provided leadership by adopting a forward-thinking approach to the future infrastructure needs for Port Stephens. In fact, many of our shopping centres have “**lost their appeal and sense of Community**” facilitating the need for residents to shop outside the LGA. For example, many Raymond Terrace residents do much of their shopping at the Greenhills Centre in East Maitland. This is creating strong expenditure leakage and subsequent detrimental impact on the Port Stephens economy.

Also, for example, Nelson Bay [which has been identified in the Hunter Regional Plan as a “Strategic Centre” based on its Tourism potential] has completely lost its “**shine and appeal**” to both **Visitors and the local community**. This accordingly is having a detrimental impact on the local economy and Jobs Growth. Economic Leakage is unfortunately a feature of our LGA and of course disappointing having regard to the fact that we have strong residential growth. In particular and clearly identified in recent research, many young [and others] people need to travel outside the LGA for work and Education [both Secondary and Tertiary] particularly from the Tomaree Peninsula. Why do a

significant number of our residents need to travel outside the LGA to be appropriately educated and skilled to be “**work ready**” ?

It is therefore very important that the Infrastructure Project funding from the proposed Special Rate Variation [SRV] is appropriately expedited and prioritised to ensure that our local economy quickly benefits and therefore allocated to the projects that will quickly generate business growth providing the catalyst for a skilled and growing work force. For example the future re- development of the partly decommissioned and dilapidated Donald St East Multi Deck Car Park in Nelson Bay provides a real opportunity and accordingly should be top priority as it has the potential to not only provide the necessary parking but also generate opportunities such as an **Educational Innovation Hub and Business incubation**, Medical Services and large commercial spaces to facilitate the future Business growth and mix of Nelson Bay Town Centre so that it truly can become an employment zone opportunity particularly for our young people. We should not forget that Nelson Bay has been identified as a “strategic centre” based on its Tourism potential and therefore has the strong opportunity to generate jobs through tourist activities such as Boutique Hotels, Serviced Apartments and other tourist activities that meet the needs of the visiting population.

Nelson Bay Town Centre is languishing and has a very tired appearance and appeal, so I therefore believe **it needs to be top priority** with the allocation of funding for the proposed SRV projects as it has the potential to quickly get runs on the board and the opportunity to remove its now very poor public image to our visitors and even our locals. Bear in mind Nelson Bay was once an Iconic Centre for the visiting public.

I therefore strongly support the application of the proposed Special Rate Variation [SRV] for Port Stephens so that the infrastructure backlog can be addressed and provide an economic boost for a rapidly growing LGA particularly on the Tomaree Peninsula which in fact generates a very large proportion of the residential rates in Port Stephens.



Peter Clough

