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Submission: I consider the increases (38.9%) to be an unfair impost on the farming sector which currently contributes 40% of total rates revenue in Gunnedah Shire. Council points out this will drop to 38.2% but it is still by far the greatest contributor. The proposed increases come after a succession of poor seasons and drought when farmers are endeavouring to make some sort of financial recovery. The farming contribution is in stark contrast to the mining sector (currently 8.64% rising to 13.6%) which is fast becoming the economic lifeblood of the town and district. I view several of council's projects including parklands development, town hall upgrades, and the Blackjack Creek flood management plan for a 1 in 100 yr event as non core expenditure. I believe no rate increases should be implemented before the council has undertaken an expenditure review program. Sound management dictates that one does undertake home renovations in times of financial stress. A modest increase would be tolerated but I believe on the scale proposed (which appears to be fulfilling a wishlist) will drive many in the rural sector to their knees. It also comes at a time when council management is under question. A vital submission to the state government which would have seen Resources for Regions funding come to Gunnedah was never made. Why should such a body be charged with more funds when this sort of ineptitude is clearly on display? Commissioners I urge caution if Gunnedah is to continue as a viable rural centre.