

# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

## **PHASE TWO**

**JANUARY TO FEBRUARY 2014**

**Community Engagement Program – Phase Two**  
**Special Rate Variation Application**

<b>Phase Two – January – February 2014</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Public Notice [1235/2014]	17 January 2014	"Public exhibition of revised plans including special rate variation proposal"
Council Website [4555/2014]	17 January 2014	Details of revised Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan including Special Rate Variation Proposal
Factsheet mail out [4556/2014]	17 January 2014	Factsheet mailed out to 7,734 ratepayers (Council, duplicate and non-rateable assessments deleted from mail out database)
Public Notice [1534/2014]	21 January 2014	Copy emailed to Bowraville, Macksville & Nambucca Chambers of Commerce
Public Notice [2267/2014]	23 January 2014	Notice appeared in Guardian News
Media Coverage [2372/2014]	30 January 2014	Guardian News "Council orders rethink after land values fall"
Media Coverage [2373/2014]	30 January 2014	Guardian News – Letter to Editor - "State needs to share the load on works"
Public Notice [4560/2014]	6 February 2014	Notice appeared in Guardian News
Media Coverage [4561/2014]	13 February 2014	Guardian News "Some residents baulk at rate hike"
Media Coverage [4570/2014]	13 February 2014	ABC News "Falling land values in the Nambucca have sparked a review of a planned rate rise"
Press Release (Mayor) [4368/2014]	17 February 2014	"Proposal to spread rate increase over three years"
Media Coverage [4561/2014]	17 February 2014	ABC News "Nambucca Shire Council promises rate income will go to road and bridge works"
Media Coverage [4703/2014]	20 February 2014	Guardian News "Crunch time looms for additional rate rise"

The community engagement activities resulted in:

- Mail out of Factsheet to 7,734 ratepayers
- 1 media release
- 4 newspaper stories
- 2 radio stories
- 2 newspaper public notices
- Email to Chambers of Commerce (3)
- 173 page views on the IP&R and Special Rate Variation sections on Council's website (January and February)
- Several radio interviews conducted by Mayor and General Manager
- 116 written submissions received [68 objections, 28 in support, 4 in partial support and 16 not indicating a definitive position]
- 26 telephone contacts with General Manager [17 objections, 7 in support and 2 not indicating a definitive position]

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## NAMBUCCA SHIRE COUNCIL

### PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF REVISED PLANS INCLUDING SPECIAL RATE VARIATION PROPOSAL

#### Plans

Council has revised its Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documents and is seeking community feedback on the following plans:

- Four Year Delivery Program 2013/14 – 2016/17
- Ten Year Long Term Financial Plan 2014/15 – 2023/24 (incorporating proposed Special Rate Variation for infrastructure renewal)

#### Exhibition period

The revised plans are on public exhibition from 17 January to 14 February 2014.

The plans can be accessed at Council's website: [www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au) and printed copies are also available for viewing at the following locations:

- Council's Administration Building
- Macksville and Nambucca Branch Libraries

#### Have your say

Written submissions are to be forwarded to the General Manager, Nambucca Shire Council, PO Box 177, Macksville 2447 or by email to [michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au).

The Council would like your feedback by 14 February 2014.

Please include the subject line 'Submission IP&R and SRV 2014/15' in your submission.

**MICHAEL COULTER**  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

**DATE 17 JANUARY 2014**

Insert Week 20 January 2014

Insert Week 3 February 2014

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4555/2014 CHANGE FONT SIZE

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- Tourism
- Have Your Say

#### NAMBUCCA WEATHER

Wind:

Swell:

Tides:



#### OUR VISION Nambucca Valley ~ Living at its best

The Nambucca Valley will value and protect its natural environment, maintain its assets and infrastructure and develop opportunities for its people.



#### Closed Roads and Current Event Information

Please be aware that road conditions can change at any time and the information detailed below is to the best of our knowledge at the stated time.

[Continue reading](#)



#### Proposed Special Rate Variation 2014/15

Council has revised its Integrated Planning & Reporting (IP&R) documents and is seeking feedback. The plans incorporate the proposed Special Rate Variation.

[Continue reading](#)



#### Australia Day 2014

Council's Australia Day Committee has considered all nominations for 2014 Australia Day Awards. Presentations to individuals & organisations will be on Sunday 26 January 2014 at the Macksville RSL. Further information coming soon.

[Continue reading](#)



#### Donations Program 2014/2015

Council can make donations or provide other financial assistance to persons or organisations for the purpose of exercising its functions under Section 356 of the Local Government Act. Applications from eligible people or organisations for financial assistance are invited.

#### Stories & Singing

Fri, Jan 17 2014

10am Every Friday at Macksville Library (except school holidays), enquiries 6568 1422

#### Stories & Singing

Fri, Jan 24 2014

10am Every Friday at Macksville Library (except school holidays), enquiries 6568 1422

#### Book Club - Macksville

Tue, Jan 28 2014

10am at Macksville Library Read a good book lately? Enjoy an informal book discussion & share your love of books with like-mi

#### Council Meeting

Thu, Jan 30 2014

5 30pm at Council Chambers in Macksville All welcome View the Business Paper on our website.

#### Stories & Singing

Fri, Jan 31 2014

10am Every Friday at Macksville Library (except school holidays), enquiries 6568 1422

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## Revised Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan including Special Rate Variation Proposal

### Plans

Council has revised its Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) documents and is seeking community feedback on the following plans:

- Four Year Delivery Program 2013/14 – 2016/17
- Ten Year Long Term Financial Plan 2014/15 – 2023/24

The plans incorporate the proposed Special Rate Variation for infrastructure renewal.

### Exhibition Period

The revised plans are on public exhibition from 17 January to 14 February 2014. The plans can be accessed at Council's website [www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au) and printed copies are also available for viewing at the following locations:

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The Council would like your feedback by 14 February 2014.

Please include the subject line 'Submission IP&R and SRV 2014/15' in your submission.

### Documents on Exhibition

Documents advertised for Public Exhibition from Nambucca Shire Council

### Draft Code of Meeting Practice

Draft Code of Meeting Practice - document on exhibition until 14 February 2014

### Development Proposal to Modify an Extractive Industry DA 1998/055

Development proposal to modify an extractive industry DA 1998/055 Lot 1 DP 1106647 & Lot 102 DP 1181639, Pacific Highway, Way Way

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## Special Rate Variation 2014/15

Council resolved in December 2013 to consult with the community on a proposal to increase rates over the next two years to fund the renewal of its roads and bridges.

### Proposed Rate Increase

The proposal is for a special variation of 5.3% in 2014/15 (including the 2.3% rate peg) and 6.0% in 2015/16 (assuming a rate peg of 3.0%) and for the special variation to be permanently incorporated into the general income base.

### Impact on Ratepayers

By the second year (1 July 2015):

the average Residential ratepayer will pay **\$105 per year or \$2.00 a week more**.

the average Farmland ratepayer will pay **\$299 per year or \$5.75 a week more**.

the average Business ratepayer will pay **\$168 per year or \$3.20 a week more**.

It should be noted that if your rate assessment is one of the 59% of all rate assessments which only pay the Minimum Rate, then your rate increase will be restricted to the permissible rate peg increase which means that by the second year (1 July 2015):

a ratepayer on the minimum Residential rate will pay **\$43 per year or \$0.83 a week more**

a ratepayer on the minimum Farmland rate will pay **\$29 per year or \$0.56 a week more**

a ratepayer on the minimum Business rate will pay **\$43 per year or \$0.83 a week more**

63% of all rate paying pensioners are on and subject to the minimum rate increases listed above.

### What is the Reason for the Rate Increase

Independent reviews of the council's financial sustainability demonstrate the need for further investment in local roads and bridges. For example the NSW Government's Treasury Corporation review assessed Council's current financial sustainability as WEAK with a long term outlook rating of NEGATIVE (April 2013).

Council is responsible for the maintenance and renewal of 666 kms of roads, 31 concrete and 146 timber bridges. We have the greatest number of timber bridges of any Council on the Mid North Coast. The extra 6.0% in rate income will enable council to invest an additional \$580,000 annually to improve the condition of these roads and bridges.

### Community Survey 2013

Of the 27 council services and facilities measured, the community indicated that they were satisfied with 12 services (44%) that Council delivered. In contrast 11 services (40%) were identified as being of higher importance but lower satisfaction. The survey highlighted that roads and bridges required the greatest attention and resources.

The survey also indicated that an increasing number of ratepayers were prepared to pay more to fix the problem. The majority of ratepayers indicated that they were willing to pay an extra \$1.88 per week or \$98 a year.

### What Are The Alternatives?

Council understands that ratepayers experience cost of living pressures. It is entirely a matter for the community as to whether or not it wishes to increase its investment in maintaining local roads and bridges. The independent and expert advice the Council has received is that it is unable to properly maintain local roads and bridges with its current expenditure.

Why can't the Council reduce expenditure in other areas so as to increase expenditure on roads and bridges and avoid a rate increase? This has been the Council's focus with a review of the organisation resulting in a reduction in staff; by the transfer of ownership of depreciating buildings and facilities to community organisations; through critically reviewing the service level of assets and by optimising opportunities for additional grant revenue. Whilst there is always room for improvement, significant savings to allow for road and bridge improvements can only be made by the community accepting unpopular decisions to discontinue existing functions and by closing facilities. This is an alternative.

#### Have Your Say

Written submissions will be accepted up to 4.00pm on Friday 14 February 2014. Please address them to the General Manager, Nambucca Shire Council, PO Box 177, Macksville 2447 or by email to [michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au). Alternatively please contact the General Manager, Mr Michael Coulter on telephone 02 65680200.

The feedback from the community will be put to Council at its meeting on 20 February 2014 and a final decision will then be made on whether or not to submit a formal application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

#### Key Dates

Friday 14 February 2014 – submissions close

Thursday 20 February 2014 – Council meeting to consider community feedback

Monday 24 February 2014 – due date for lodgement of formal application with IPART

Public Forum Powerpoint Presentation November 2013 (1.8mb)

Council Meeting Report 11 December 2013

Fact Sheet January 2014

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#### Documents on Exhibition

Direct links to documents advertised for Public Exhibition from Nambucca Shire Council  
[Read more...](#)

#### Policies

Policies express Council's position on a particular issue or subject.  
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#### Environment

Council recognises that the state of our natural and built environments is fundamental to the sustainability and viability of our communities.  
[Read more...](#)





# Proposed Special Rate Variation

Dear Ratepayer

Council has resolved to consult with the community on a proposal to increase rates over the next two years to fund the renewal of our local roads and bridges.

## Proposed Rate Increase

The proposal is for a special variation (increase in rate revenue) of 5.3% in 2014/15 and 6.0% in 2015/16 (assuming a rate peg of 3%) and for the special variation to be permanently incorporated into the Council's general income.

## Impact on Ratepayers

By the second year (1 July 2015):

- the average Residential ratepayer will pay **\$105 per year or \$2.00 per week more**.
- the average Farmland ratepayer will pay **\$299 per year or \$5.75 per week more**.
- the average Business ratepayer will pay **\$168 per year or \$3.20 per week more**.

It should be noted that if your rate assessment is one of the 59% of all rate assessments which continue to pay the Minimum Rate (currently \$724), then your rate increase will be restricted to the permissible rate peg increase which means that by the second year (1 July 2015):

- a ratepayer on the minimum Residential rate will pay **\$43 per year or \$0.83 a week more**
- a ratepayer on the minimum Farmland rate will pay **\$29 per year or \$0.56 a week more**
- a ratepayer on the minimum Business rate will pay **\$43 per year or \$0.83 a week more**

63% of all rate paying pensioners are on and subject to the minimum rate increases listed above.



*Menzies Bridge on South Arm Road*



*Boat Harbour Bridge on Boat Harbour Road*



*Browns Bridge on Browns Crossing Road*



## What is the Reason for the Rate Increase

Independent reviews of the council's financial sustainability demonstrate the need for further investment in local roads and bridges. For example the NSW Government's Treasury Corporation review assessed Council's current financial sustainability as WEAK with a long term outlook rating of NEGATIVE (April 2013).

Council is responsible for the maintenance and renewal of 666 kms of roads, 31 concrete and 146 timber bridges. We have the greatest number of timber bridges of any Council on the Mid North Coast. The extra 6.0% in rate income will enable council to invest an additional \$580,000 annually to improve the condition of these roads and bridges.

## Community Survey 2013

Of the 27 council services and facilities measured, the community indicated that they were satisfied with 12 services (44%) that Council delivered. In contrast 11 services (40%) were identified as being of higher importance but lower satisfaction. The survey highlighted that roads and bridges require the greatest attention and resources.

The survey also indicated that an increasing number of ratepayers were prepared to pay more to fix the problem. The majority of ratepayers indicated that they were willing to pay an extra \$1.88 per week or \$98 a year.

## What Are The Alternatives?

Council understands that ratepayers experience cost of living pressures. It is a matter for the community as to whether or not it wishes to increase its investment in maintaining its local roads and bridges. The independent and expert advice the Council has received is that it is unable to properly maintain local roads and bridges with its current expenditure.

Why can't the Council reduce expenditure in other areas so as to increase expenditure on roads and bridges and avoid a rate increase? This has been the Council's focus with a review of the organisation resulting in a reduction in staff; the transfer of ownership of buildings and facilities to community organisations; a reduction in the service levels of some assets and by optimising opportunities for additional grant revenue. Whilst there is always room for improvement, further significant savings to allow for road and bridge improvements can only be made by the community accepting unpopular decisions to discontinue existing functions and by closing facilities. But this is an alternative to increasing rates.

## Have Your Say

Council's website [www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au) contains further information on the proposal.

Please address written submissions to the General Manager, Nambucca Shire Council, PO Box 177, Macksville 2447 or by email to [michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au](mailto:michael.coulter@nambucca.nsw.gov.au). Alternatively please telephone the General Manager, Mr Michael Coulter on 65680200 or 0409153788. The Council would like your feedback by 14 February 2014.

The feedback will be put to Council's meeting on 20 February 2014 and a final decision will then be made on whether or not to submit the proposal to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). IPART have the power to approve in full or in part or to refuse an application from Council. If the rate increase is supported and approved, there will be a quarterly progress report on the expenditure of the funds.

## Key Dates

- Friday 14 February 2014 – deadline for feedback
- Thursday 20 February 2014 – Council meeting to consider community feedback
- Monday 24 February 2014 – due date for lodgement of formal application with IPART

TRIM SF1842

**Peter Wilson**

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**From:** Peter Wilson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 21 January 2014 10:02 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]

1534/2014.

**Subject:** TRIM: FW: Public Exhibition of Revised Plans incorporating a Special Rate Variation Proposal  
**Attachments:** Special Rate Variation Fact Sheet Final.pdf; NSC Public Notice DP LTFP SRV Jan 2014 Display.pdf

Dear Bowraville, Macksville and Nambucca Chambers of Commerce

Attached for your information is a copy of Council's Public Notice advising of the public exhibition of the revised Delivery Program and Long Term Financial Plan  
The revised plans incorporate a proposal to apply for a Special Rate Variation for the years 2014/15 and 2015/16  
Also attached is a copy of the Special Rate Variation Factsheet which has been mailed out to all ratepayers

**Peter Wilson**  
Manager Special Projects  
Nambucca Shire Council  
PO Box 177 Macksville NSW 2447  
**Direct:** (02) 6568 0262  
**Web:** [www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au)  
*Nambucca Valley ~ Living at its best*

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **NAMBUCCA SHIRE COUNCIL**

TRIM SF1842  
4368/2014

### **Proposal to Spread Rate Increase over Three Years**

The recent general revaluation of properties in the Nambucca Valley has resulted in a reduction in residential land values of \$90m compared to 2010. This reduction has in turn affected the impacts of the rate increase which Council had proposed, being to increase general rate revenue by 5.3% in 2014/2015 and 6% in 2015/2016.

A revaluation of properties doesn't change the amount of rate income the Shire will levy, but it does impact on the amount contributed by each individual rate payer. It changes the balance of "who pays what". Rate payers can potentially pay more or less each time their property is revalued.

This revaluation had the effect of moving 75% of residential assessments to the minimum rate. The minimum rate will increase by the rate pegged amount of 2.3% which is less than the proposed special rate variation of 5.3%. The flow on effect has been that some residential properties not levied at the minimum rate have had a disproportionately large increase in rates. The proposed special rate variation compounds this effect.

Because of this the Council is now considering spreading the proposed rate increase over three years instead of two years. Assuming an inflation index of 3% (the rate peg) in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, the three year option will ultimately provide a similar real increase in the Council's permanent revenue of \$570,000 per annum (in 2014 dollars) compared to bringing in the rate increase over two years.

The three year proposal would increase general rate revenue by:

3.8% in 2014/2015; 5.0% in 2015/2016; and 5.5% in 2016/2017

The additional rate revenue will be used to fund the renewal of local roads and bridges. The Council is responsible for 666kms of roads, 31 concrete and 146 timber bridges.

The expenditure of all of the additional revenue on the road and bridge network is not only consistent with the recommendations of independent reviews but also customer satisfaction surveys. A recent investigation of Council's finances by the NSW Government's Treasury Corporation assessed the Council's current financial sustainability as weak with a long term outlook rating of negative. A significant cause of these ratings has been Council's failure to adequately fund the renewal of roads and bridges.

Beside the requirements for Council to renew its road and bridge assets it also has to consider the community's capacity to pay and achieve the appropriate balance. The Council will be deciding whether or not to make application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for this increase at a special meeting at 5.30pm on Thursday 20 February 2014. The public are welcome to attend the meeting and any person may register to address the Council by contacting Monika Schuhmacher on 65680214 on or before 12 noon on Thursday 20 February

17 February 2013 .../ends

For enquiries please contact the Mayor, Councillor Rhonda Hoban on 0408 661 412