

Saturday 28 March 2015

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)
Level15, 2-24 Rawson Place
SYDNEY NSW 2000
(via email to: localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Commissioner,

Re: Letter of Support Newcastle City Council Special Rates Variation

I write in support of Newcastle City Council's request for a Special Rates Variation of Option 3 (a SRV of 8% over 5 years).

In addition to achieving financial sustainability, Option 3 provides funds to resolve the \$90 million infrastructure backlog, which will make a noticeable difference, fixing the issues both big and small which have been disrupting the City in recent years. Additionally only Option 3 also allows for significant improvements in services, and the delivery of the following:

- Online DA tracking - creating a smoother experience and greater transparency for developers, residents and business
- Elimination of \$90million infrastructure backlog
- More pedestrian and local traffic improvements (including delivery of the current \$53million of approved but unfunded projects across the LGA)
- Implementation of the Cycling Strategy and Action Plan, including dedicated inner city cycle lanes and the Richmond Vale Rail Trail
- Support for economic revitalisation of Newcastle
- Completion of restoration of the sandstone facade of the City Hall
- Replacement of bus shelters
- Improvement of community facilities including swimming pools and libraries
- Modernisation of libraries
- Expansion of community engagement program
- Increase in bush regeneration works
- Accelerated delivery of Hunter Street Revitalisation improvements
- Accelerated delivery of Blackbutt Reserve improvements
- Accelerated delivery of Coastal Revitalisation projects

These projects are of significant value to me, and to the Newcastle community more generally. The Option 3 rates variation comes at a small cost to the community, yet will deliver significant upgrades. I hope that IPART accepts Newcastle City Council's request.

Yours Sincerely,
