



Steve McGrath
General Manager
Coffs Harbour City Council
By Email

Dear Steve

RE: CBD SPECIAL RATE

We write to Council on behalf of the major CBD property owners listed overleaf in respect of the proposed extension of the existing CBD special rate which has now expired.

Council has recently carried out a phone survey which indicated some support by property owners in the CBD for an extension of the rate. The survey also found that there was little support to have the rate extended to other business properties elsewhere in the city.

As owners of the major retail and commercial properties affected by this rate we recognise the advantages that can be achieved in maintaining and strengthening the viability of the CBD by the application of such a rate to works which enhance the presentation, amenity, public facilities and positioning of the CBD as the central core location for Coffs Harbour's business and community life.

It is important that the rate is carefully targeted at only projects which provide clear and significant benefits to the CBD as set out above and that those projects are identified, concept-developed and agreed as part of a 10 year Town Centre Master Plan developed by property owners and Council with the assistance of professional advisors as reasonably required.

Accordingly we offer our support for the extension of the special rate conditional on the following:

1. The new special rate be limited to those properties that have contributed to the previous special rate;
2. The formulation of a 10 year Town Centre Master Plan by property owners and Council with the assistance of appropriate professional consultants which identifies and details the projects that are agreed should be carried out using the special rate funds;

3. A Committee is established pursuant to Section 355 of Local Government Act, comprising majority representation of property owners and including representatives of Council to scope, commission, develop, adopt, manage and administer the 10 year plan;
4. All projects undertaken from funds generated by the special rate be independently and professionally managed under the direction and control of the 355 committee; and
5. Projects undertaken by the special rate be limited to works which enhance the presentation, amenity, public facilities and positioning of the CBD as the central core location for Coffs Harbour's business and community life and have a clear benefit to the commercial and retail aspect of the CBD but excluding projects that are of a general community type or involve maintenance of existing facilities.

We understand that a similar 355 committee has been adopted by Port Macquarie and we look forward to consultations with council to achieve a similar result.

We also understand that there is some urgency in obtaining the necessary approvals from the NSW government in respect of the rate application and would be pleased to attend discussions with yourself at short notice to further progress this proposal.

Yours Faithfully

20 January 2012

Steve McGrath
General Manager
Coffs Harbour City Council
By Email

Dear Steve

RE: CBD SPECIAL RATE

I write to Council in respect of the proposed extension of the existing CBD special rate which expires June 2012.

Council has recently carried out a phone survey which indicated some support by property owners in the CBD for an extension of the rate. The survey also found that there was little support to have the rate extended to other business properties elsewhere in the city.

As an owner, and representative of a number of commercial properties affected by this rate I recognise the advantages that can be achieved in maintaining and strengthening the viability of the CBD by the application of such a rate to works which enhance the presentation, amenity, public facilities and positioning of the CBD as the central core location for Coffs Harbour's business and community life.

It is important that the rate is carefully targeted at only projects which provide clear and significant benefits to the CBD as set out above and that those projects are identified, concept-developed and agreed as part of a 10 year Town Centre Master Plan developed by property owners and Council with the assistance of professional advisors as reasonably required.

Accordingly I offer my support for the extension of the special rate conditional on the following:

1. The new special rate be limited to those properties that have contributed to the previous special rate;
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3. A Committee is established pursuant to Section 355 of Local Government Act, comprising majority representation of property owners and including representatives of Council to scope, commission, develop, adopt, manage and administer the 10 year plan;
4. All Projects undertaken from funds generated by the special rate be independently and professionally managed under the direction and control of the 355 committee; and
5. Projects undertaken by the special rate within the CBD be limited to works that relate to land use issues, and improvements to streetscape and public domain, transport movement connections, parking, and surveillance issues, such to enhance the positioning of the CBD as the central core location for Coffs Harbour's business and community life and have a clear benefit to the commercial and retail aspect of the CBD.

I understand that a similar 355 committee has been adopted by Port Macquarie and I look forward to consultations with council to achieve a similar result.

I also understand that there is some urgency in obtaining the necessary approvals from the NSW government in respect of the rate application and would be pleased to attend discussions with yourself at short notice to further progress this proposal.

Yours Sincerely

To: Craig Milburn

Sent: Sat Feb 18 11:55:21 2012

Subject: CHCC- CBD rate application - IPART

Goodmorning Craig,

I have been instructed to write on behalf

They advise that the formation of a Town Centre Master Plan, by property owners and council with the assistance of appropriate professional consultants which identifies and details the projects that are agreed should be carried out using the special rate funds. The Town Centre Master Plan should also provide guidance to planners on appropriate location of Court House, Police Station and Government Administration block (and potentially other key civic destinations such as a cultural precinct), thereby ensuring that best planning objectives are met in regard to streetscape and public domain, transport movement, car parking, pedestrian connections, parkland, and surveillance issues.

In particular;

1. They are happy with the level of consultation
2. They are keen for the Rate rise to continue
3. They would like to see a committee established pursuant to S 355 which will provide accountability
4. They note the previous rate rise has succeeded in its goals
5. The rate area should remain as is.

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Yours Sincerely

Sent: Wednesday, 8 February 2012 11:16 AM
To: Craig Milburn

Subject: Town Centre Masterplan Committee - s355 LGA
Importance: High

Craig

I understand you require a further confirmation from CBD property owners regarding the proposal to IPART to establish a s355 Town Centre Master Plan Committee to develop and implement a master plan for the Coffs Harbour CBD special rate area.

Gowing Bros. Ltd confirms its decision to support a further 10 year extension of the special levy on the basis of the terms set out in the letter dated 20 January, 2012 authored by Lance Cousins for & on behalf of Gowing Bros. Ltd among others. A copy of that letter is attached and should be read in conjunction with this email. Gowing Bros Ltd is not prepared to support any arrangement regarding the special levy other than the formation of a s355 LGA Committee which is controlled appropriate representative of the rated property owners and which is operating to implement an agreed and fully documented Town Centre Master Plan.

I am currently a member of the Port Macquarie TCMP Committee and am aware of the success that has been achieved there as a result of a similar process to that required in the Lance Cousins letter, namely:

1. Formation of a Committee comprised of property owners, Councillors and appropriate Council officers all of whom have the requisite experience and motivation to make a meaningful contribution to the Committee;
2. The Committee must ultimately operate on the basis that the owners have control over the manner in which their funds are spent or at least by consensus so that Council cannot take control of the activities of the Committee;
3. Development of a master plan with the assistance of a professional, properly qualified urban planning consultant operating to an agreed scope;
4. Unanimous approval of the master plan once fully developed through a consultative process;
5. Employment by the Committee of a professional project management resource independent of Council and accountable only to the Committee;
6. Preparation of a works priority schedule;

7. Implementation, monitoring and administration of the agreed works schedule by the Committee.

The fact there is not an existing master plan is, in our opinion, an opportunity to bring fresh eyes to works which have been undertaken as a result of the previously mandated special levy and to develop, by Committee consensus, a second stage of appropriate works to supplement that which has gone before and having regard to the issues currently faced by the Coffs Harbour CBD area covered by the proposed special levy.

I trust the contents of this email will assist you in your discussions with IPART.

If you require any further input from this company in order to facilitate the establishment of a Committee with an acceptable Charter/Terms of Reference please do not hesitate to let me know.

Like others in the owners group identified in the Lance Cousins letter I would appreciate Gowing Bros Ltd being included on all email or other correspondence which has a bearing on the process of approval of the levy and the formation of the s355 Committee.

Please confirm receipt of this email.

Regards

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Yours Sincerely

Sent: Tuesday, 21 February 2012 12:29 PM
To: Craig Milburn
Subject: CHCC- CBD rate application - IPART

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----- Original Message -----

To: Craig Milburn
Sent: Fri Feb 17 13:56:49 2012
Subject: City Centre Rate

Dear Craig

In relation to the CHCC application for a Special Rate:

The proposed Rate is well supported but strongly subject to the expenditure being directed to projects supported by town centre stakeholders and only in the town centre area. The previous Rate was mostly well spent and the opening of Harbour Drive has been a positive. However, in hindsight, there was not enough focus on "big picture" planning resulting in some funds not being directed to the most important issues because they had not been properly identified. Some previously identified projects have not been completed.

It is a fact that the traffic flows, pedestrian flows, parking needs etc have changed dramatically over the years. City Centre stakeholders are very supportive of these issues on these being rectified.

Therefore, a new Town Centre Master Plan, prepared by property owners and council with the assistance of appropriate professional consultants is critical prior to further expenditure. The Plan must identify and detail the projects that should be carried out using the special rate funds and prioritise them. This, in my opinion, is an appropriate starting point for expenditure of the new Rate.

The Town Centre Master Plan should also provide guidance to planners on appropriate location of the Court House, Police Station and Government Administration block (and potentially other key civic destinations such as a cultural precinct), thereby ensuring that best planning objectives are met in regard to streetscape and public domain, transport movement, car parking, pedestrian connections, parkland, and surveillance issues. The current State Government policy seems to be simply expedient - locate the buildings on owned land and ignore the basic principles of good town planning.

Your faithfullty

15 February 2012
Ref No: 9027422

General Manager
Coffs Harbour City Council
Locked Bag 155
COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450

Attention: Steve McGrath

Dear Steve

Coffs Harbour Special Business Rate Proposal

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on Council's application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a proposed Special Rate on business property owners within the Coffs Harbour city centre.

GeoLINK strongly supports the application as a positive initiative to broaden Council's revenue base and to deliver much needed improvements to the city. In preparing the application, it is also our opinion that:

- Council's community consultation process has been fair and rigorous. The outcomes of this process have fully guided the direction and scope of the final IPART application;
- The preparation of a town centre masterplan as proposed by Council is an essential first task in delivering the Special Rate program. Without a comprehensive strategic plan, there is a real risk that capital works may not be comprehensively planned, coordinated or implemented in an optimal or cost effective manner;
- The capital works funded by the previous Special Rate have significantly enhanced the public domain of the town centre with far reaching benefit to the visual image and economic and social well being of the city. This is demonstrated evidence of the value of the rate and the need for it to continue;
- The proposed creation of a joint council / community management committee to oversee the preparation and implementation of the masterplan will provide the most desirable and accountable delivery method for all stakeholders throughout the life of the Special Rate program; and
- The proposed rate amount and the boundaries of its application are considered fair and equitable as they have been based on the previous Special Rate program.

We wish Council well in its endeavours to seek widespread community endorsement for the application and in gaining final approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

Yours sincerely

To: Craig Milburn

Sent: Tue Feb 21 10:40:12 2012

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Date: 21 February 2012 2:09:57 PM AEDT
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