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NSW

13 October 2018

Submission to IPART re. IPART's review of prices for Central Coast Council from 1 July 2019

We wish to register our strong objection to Central Coast Council's proposed "area based approach" to achieve a "fair and equitable" drainage rate as proposed to apply to non-residential properties.

- There is nothing "fair and equitable" about this proposal when a residential property will pay \$110.77 and properties greater than 45,000m² will pay an exorbitant \$5427.81.
- CCC justifies the change to an area based approach to bring it into line with Hunter Water and Sydney Water. This is no justification for CCC to following suit.
- We reside in the rural hinterland of the old Gosford Shire. There is no drainage infrastructure other than road culverts and side drains and there is never likely to be.
- In our case any rain falling on our property is absorbed within the property and in excessively wet times any runoff flows into natural creeks without the requirement of drainage infrastructure. Most runoff from local properties finds its way into Council's water supply dams and doesn't go to waste. I would have thought Council would welcome as much runoff as possible into the dam catchment.
- Council refers to a "Low Impact" rate upon application. This needs to be clearly defined and the types of situations to which it will apply. Our trust in Council is not that great that we would be happy to let them come up with the rules after approval.
- This area comprises a mix of active farms and lifestyle properties and a few small acreages. Very few properties will not be affected by this proposal. Many are owned by farming families who have retired but wish to remain living in their community but will find it difficult to be able to stay as will many non-farming owners.
- Over the years we have been pinged for all sorts of levies outside of the ordinary rate i.e. Open Space, Library, Sporting Facilities, Environment, Water Safety etc. We receive no services i.e. water or sewer from Council other than garbage collection for which we pay. Council puts a \$52 a year levy on septic systems for no return.
- Just because a property is large doesn't mean the owner is wealthy. How is anyone expected to pay an increased drainage rate of up to \$5427.81. In our case, the combined rate will be more than \$8000. Very few residential properties on the coast would be paying anything like that.
- Council's submission appears to be urban focused with little regard to rural issues.

- If approved many people could be forced off their land and it will have a negative impact on real estate prices.
- This issue appears to have been very badly handled by Council. We are not aware of any consultation with those impacted by this proposal. We have only been made aware of Council's submission in the last few days. Nobody we have spoken to has known anything about it. A last-minute letter addressed to "The Resident" has been received by some properties. Need we point out that "The Resident" is not always the owner who is the one responsible for the rates. We still haven't received a letter.

We request that IPART reject CCC's submission and they be directed to retain the existing flat rate arrangement applying to residential and non-residential properties.

Yours Faithfully

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