

Contact: Craig Richardson

20 December 2013

Dr Peter J Boxall AO
Chairman
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of NSW
PO Box Q290
QVB Post Office NSW 1230

Dear Dr Boxall

REVIEW OF THE FUNDING FRAMEWORK FOR LOCAL LAND SERVICES

Council has resolved at its meeting on 16 December 2013 to object to the proposals presented by the Local Land Services Board of Chairs (LLS BoC) in their late submission to IPART.

In particular, Council objects to the proposals for Councils to levy and collect rates on behalf of the LLS for properties less than 2Ha and for Councils to pay LLS rates on public land.

The basis of Councils objections is as follows:

- 1 The inclusion of a LLS BoC levy on Council rate notices is likely to create the perception that Council has a financial relationship with the LLS
- 2 The inclusion of LLS levy on rate notices will be interpreted by many property owners as a rate rise
- 3 Councils do not have the financial capacity to pay additional charges and should be exempt from such charges given the significant role played by Councils in environmental, biodiversity and land management programs and community education. The proposal is also inconsistent with the existing exemptions under the Local Government Act and applied by Councils towards public lands owned by the State.
- 4 Council is also concerned that the proposal to include all agricultural land less than 2 Ha will impose an unreasonable burden on small rural residential landowners with very minor agricultural interests.
- 5 The proposals presented by the LLS BoC are unnecessarily complex, will cause confusion to property owners and will be problematic for Councils to administer.

In resolving to object to the LLS BOC prospects, Council has considered the serious concerns outlined by Local Government NSW (LGNSW) in its letter to IPART dated 9 December 2013. Council has resolved to support the submission made by LGNSW.

As a member of REROC, Wagga Wagga City Council has also provided input to the submission made by REROC dated 16 December 2013 and is fully in support of the REROC submission.

Council would welcome the opportunity to meet with IPART and discuss our concerns in more detail. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to clarify any of the above points.

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Phil Pinyon.

Phil Pinyon
General Manager

cr/jm

cc: shaun.mcbride@lgns.org.au