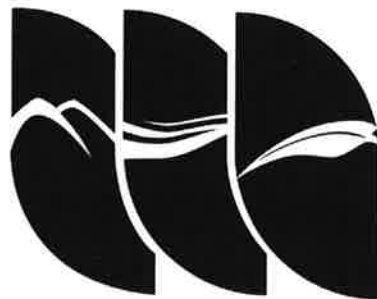


TABLED DOCUMENT 1

ITEM NO. 1 REVISED INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING DOCUMENTS AND DEBT RECOVERY AND HARDSHIP POLICY

COMMUNITY SUBMISSIONS

EXTRA ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING
29 JANUARY 2019



PORT STEPHENS
C O U N C I L

| | SHORT SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON EHQ |
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| 1 | <p>The council needs to live within its means. 70% of written responses and 75% of telephone responses were against the SRV. Council is elected by, and works for, the ratepayers of Port Stephens. If residents are requesting more services they need to understand this will cost. We do understand this. The percentages of respondents against the SRV shows that the majority have considered this and realise that we will have to make do with slower growth of services and slower improvements to amenities so as to keep the cost of living down. This SRV amounts to a 66% increase in rates over 7 years. Do council realise that many in Port Stephens are already struggling to make ends meet?</p> <p>Council talks about consulting, then insults by ignoring the outcome of the consultations. If council are convinced they have the majority backing of ratepayers, then they should take this to the next council elections by asking for a mandate to impose an SRV on Port Stephens ratepayers.</p> <p>This way we get a say, as we are not being listened to now.</p> |
| 2 | <p>We do not want the special rate variation you are not listening to the community jam your formal submission were the sun does not shine.</p> |
| 3 | <p>I don't agree with the proposals from Port Stephens Council.</p> <p>I live in a fringe country area far from the planned spending sprees. What happened to user pays? I remember when council elected to run kerb and gutter out the front of my property and I was required to pay for this...there was no special rate variation so that everyone chipped in.</p> <p>At Wallalong we are all but forgotten by PSC when it comes to many things except collection of rates. Our rates are already high enough plus take into the cost of electricity and a septic pump out bill of over \$100.00 every 3 weeks...enough is enough.</p> <p>So....NO to the PSC proposals.</p> |
| 4 | <p>The majority of residents in Port Stephens are not wealthy people. With hospitality and tourism being the predominate industries, young families are on low incomes and all residents are struggling as it is with huge increases in electricity and mortgage rates.</p> <p>Businesses will have to pass on all these increases - flow on effect.</p> <p>This rate increase will be a negative for buying in Port Stephens and families, pensioners and self funded retirees on low fixed incomes will be totally stressed and their quality of life diminished. Most projects Council has listed are not essential. I have not met anyone in this LGA (apart from Council) who are in favour if this rate increase. Yet Council just decides. They organise all the community consultation because it is part of the process of lodgement of SRV application but have already decided and don't listen to its constituents. Council should manage their budget and residents should not be paying for its mismanagement, court cases etc.</p> <p>I will be writing to IPART strongly objecting to this rate increase.</p> |
| 5 | <p>While all the plans for improvements are most worthwhile, I think it is too much to expect the ratepayers to accept such a huge increase in rates over the next 7 years. I would like council to trim their cloth to better suit the community, by initiating a smaller rates increase, and undertaking improvement projects in a more staggered way over a longer time span.</p> <p>The present plan risks alienating a great proportion of ratepayers, to the detriment of our community as a whole.</p> |

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| 6 | <p>It is appropriate that the Council should seek community involvement in the allocation of resources and funding for identified projects, particularly when a significant increase in rates is required to achieve community projects included in the 7 year plan.</p> <p>As a long term member of the Tilligerry Bridge Club I have been involved in discussions with our Council since Councillor Nell was Mayor, through Bruce Mackenzie's tenure and now during Mayor Ryan's term. Despite consistent indications of support necessary Council and grant funding, which would complement direct funding by the Tilligerry Bridge Club itself , has never materialised.</p> <p>With over 50 active members our club holds bridge sessions twice weekly every week throughout the year as well as an annual congress for over 120 regional bridge players. We have been fortunate to be hosted by Club Lemon Tree since inception of the club some 15 years ago. In that time regular approaches have been made to Port Stephens Council seeking support to establish a specific Bridge Club facility. The most recent proposal has been under discussion for four years involving the addition of a room on the Senior Citizens facility in Tanilba Avenue with the Bridge Club contributing directly to the necessary construction. This project would make better use of an existing Council facility to the benefit of both Clubs.</p> <p>There is a history of Councils in NSW supporting bridge clubs through allocation of land or buildings and many of those clubs are now major NSW Bridge clubs including Ballina, Port Macquarie, Foster and Armidale. Most recently the Great Lakes Council has supported the Hawks Nest Bridge Club in establishing its own clubhouse this being achieved within two years of their initial application to Council.</p> <p>While Bridge, like many recreational activities, is a young people's game it is recognised to be a valuable exercise for the brain particularly helpful to the elderly who represent the majority of members of most bridge clubs. While sports facilities for the younger generation in our community are essential Council should not ignore the often neglected recreational needs of retirees and the very significant proportion of the local population who fall into this age bracket.</p> <p>The Tilligerry Bridge Club is seeking not only recognition, but also positive action in support by Council for its objective to establish its own bridge room by inclusion as one of the projects supported under the Council's forward plan.</p> |
| 7 | <p>I strongly support the inclusion of renovation of the Avenue of the Allies as an important and urgent community project. This street is a feature of our Tilligerry peninsula and should be given the action and recognition that it deserves.</p> |
| 8 | <p>I don't think this is a good idea. A lot of families in the area are struggling to send their school to excursions and pay for basic living conditions. Whether they are renting or rate payers these extra rates will have to be passed on to local families. I would rather see the project funded through grants and community fundraising. I also think this may affect the real estate market which is already showing signs of struggling.</p> |

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| 9 | <p>I have already written to councillors in relation to the SRV however wanted to ensure that my comments are included in assessments by quoting PSC 2017-01717-001 I believe it is important for Council to know that I do not support a 7.5% SRV over such a long period of time.</p> <p>I not only do not support but I strongly object to the Recommendation of Option 3 - 7.5 % cumulative increase over 7years</p> <p>Councils arguments for the 7.5% rate increase over 7 years is not clearly justified. Amounts allocated to various projects are in very round figures and appear to have been rounded to the next highest \$100,000 or \$500,000 there appears to have been no quotes attained for much of the work nor has the community feedback which did not support this rate rise appear to have been considered at all.</p> <p>There is a claim that the community can sustain a 7.5% SRV for 7 years but I do not see any research to support this.</p> <p>Published results for the submissions identified 74% of participants in the opt in survey supported only a 2.5% rate peg and the random phone survey also came in with 61% supporting the rate peg rather than a SRV of 7.5%. No matter what the change to the rates attained is I do not support an arbitrary 7 year extension as this does not allow for review or re-assessment during the works period. I believe a 3 year term would be sufficient it would also see Council better tied to delivery in the short term and allow for any major events not forecast such as a GFC type event or a war.</p> <p>Relief measures are set for pensioners but it is not only pensioners that struggle financially. Relief which needs to be applied for can be embarrassing particularly in smaller communities.</p> <p>I am writing to you and other councillors as a resident and ratepayer. This communication is in no way from any organisation which I represent or do business with, purely as an individual invested in the community.</p> <p>The proposed 7.5% SRV increase contains the following items</p> <p>Town Centre and neighbourhood revitalisation</p> <p>Anna Bay • Fern Bay • Fingal Bay • Karuah • Lemon Tree Passage Medowie • Nelson Bay • Raymond Terrace • Seaham</p> <p>Sporting facilities upgrade</p> <p>More funding for libraries and community services Community amenities – including new BBQ and public facilities across LGA</p> <p>More events in Port Stephens</p> <p>Drainage improvements for Shoal Bay</p> <p>To address these points:</p> <p>While town centre vitality is something I am passionate about I believe that this activity is best driven by bottom up initiatives such as the pride of place murals in Anna Bay and the newly painted artworks in the bus shelters managed by the Soldiers Point Lions Club.</p> <p>Allowing traders and local groups to do what they can to enhance their doorsteps is working in Nelson Bay with no cost to ratepayers and some of these businesses will surely go under once their rents go up to cover the costs. Since the Nelson Bay Chamber put on a working bee the town has seen great improvement. I believe that the investment in the Yacabba St extension is a positive one creating a much needed road link which has delivered a dual purpose space however, this is a unique situation faced by Nelson Bay which is not duplicated in the other townships. Perhaps rather than the investment in town centre revitalisation there should be</p> |
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some workshops in the DIY option that Nelson Bay and Taree have used. The business levy used to pay for these services as well as contribute to events – rather than charge residents an exorbitant increase perhaps bringing back the business levy would be a more viable option.

Sporting Facilities upgrades – I believe that the sporting facilities need to service the local community but that we do not need to build facilities to attract outside sports – we have great natural assets that can attract international grade sports and we should focus on our unique selling points rather than try to take on the competitive placement of sporting events that could be held at any oval facility. Who wouldn't want to surf Port Stephens, Paddle the Bay, triathlon in nature or simply Sail Port Stephens...

Libraries – well we don't need a pop up library within 300 metres of the actual library at Salamander Bay for starters! This is totally baffling – when we can't get a bus stop outside the new medical centre but we can put two libraries within a shorter walking distance it defies common sense. Which would service the community better?

BBQ's etc – The park which the Soldiers Point Lions Club has just rejuvenated is a case for how Council can work with community groups to deliver increased amenities without a rate rise.

More events for Port Stephens – no one loves delivering a good event more than I, and yes some of the events that I have in the past held in Port Stephens were funded but some were not funded by Council at all, and all were viable fun and enhanced the local community. In delivering community events for locals, Council is delivering for the local community which it serves, but funding events to drive economic development is a different issue. Sustainable events are possible in Port Stephens – I was guest speaker on this topic at the Department of Trade and Investments Community Development Conference in the Hunter Valley. It is a matter of how the events are managed and marketed, and yes some support from Council will always be appreciated. In the end we are a destination at the Bay and our natural assets attract people, both here and in the west. The events for the SRV are regional not community –and staff – with potentially a lot of paperwork created without any actual outcomes. Here in Port Stephens we are a series of villages capable of delivering regional events – I myself delivered Tastes at the Bay and gained Regional Flagship Event Funding for the event over a 6 year period (\$90,000) – it goes to how the event and funds are managed – yes Council supported the event with \$10K p.a. but much of this was spent with Council for land use, waste removal, electricity etc. If Council wants \$3.5 million for regional events over 7 years they are looking at investing \$9615 per week, just \$400 less than contributed to the Blue Water Country Music Festival and Tastes at the Bay, 2010-2013 p.a. into events – I do not believe that Port Stephens needs an event of the magnitude of Tastes at the Bay (2013) delivered every week – nor do I believe that Council will spend the funds on events but rather on more staff to create more event red tape.

Drainage – on this item you have my full support - I don't object to fixing Shoal Bay drainage – after all Port Stephen Council's biggest assets are its drains.

I object to a Council that was rated fit for the future based on sound investments ignoring the legacy of our past councillors good management setting a rate hike to deliver what I believe are in many cases unjustified. I do not believe Council has listened to the community – if it had the lower SRV would be what we would be looking at. In my work I am connected to the community and I believe that Council has not listened and has simply gotten the SRV proposal wrong. I believe that Port

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| | <p>Stephens is a paradise which most residents are happy with – yes we may ask for things but Council has an obligation to serve as well as manage to do this within its limitations and existing budget. Last year only one Council applied for a 7 year rate rise (file:///C:/Users/Real/AppData/Local/Temp/fact-sheet-nsw-councils-special-variation-and-minimum-rate-applications-for-2018-19-15-may-2018.pdf). That Port Stephens Council has lower rates than other councils in the Hunter is irrelevant – it is something we can thank your predecessors for in their investments for our future. We are fit for the future as we are – we don't need to merge and we don't need an SRV of this magnitude.</p> <p>Imagine being a pensioner and currently struggling to feed yourself and facing a rate rise of this magnitude – I have concerns for these people's mental and physical health, what this will do to our at risk youth. I don't think any one of you fits into this profile and for that you can be thankful, but have you gone to the food handout events and seen people here doing it tough? I have...</p> <p>I understand that the majority of those that provided Council with feedback did not support the 7.5% option and I believe that we should be working as a democracy and any business and living within our means. If the community democratically provided Council with a general acceptance of the lower rate that is what you as representatives of the community should vote for not a higher rate rise.</p> |
| 10 | <p>If you believe a person of average intelligence has the ability to absorb, let alone fully understand this document, I pity you.</p> <p>Apart from the weekly emptying of garbage, I have no use for Port Stephens Council. I live in the middle of Raymond Terrace, have no sewerage, no kerb or footpath and with or without a special rate variation, there is no likelihood of any improvement in the next 50 years let alone the period of the special rate variation.</p> <p>This is no proper timetable or costing of the so called works covered by the additional rates. Instead of wasting ratepayers money fighting lost legal causes and my believe remains that any money raised will be used as part payment of the \$30 million to be paid in respect of the Lagoons Estate fiasco.</p> |
| 11 | <p>I feel council has done a great deal of Due Diligence regarding the SRV and the Draft IP&R document submission to allow the council to continue the needs of the greater community of Port Stephens.</p> <p>I cannot wait to see some of the proposed works program roll out across Port Stephens in 2019-2020 and into the future.</p> |
| 12 | <p>I do not agree with the proposed Rate rise. Council need to prioritize their expansion program and reduce it. They also need to prioritise spending and tighten their budget. This rise is too high and is simple greed and ambition to make changes for change sake. Port Stephens does not need huge changes at any cost. Slow and steady change is more sustainable. Rate payers will not get a good deal under this proposed change. Many will suffer financial stress. It is totally unacceptable and council know it thru their own research. Please remember this is a Democratic society and you should be listening to your rate payers not indulging in a personal campaign to make your mark.</p> |

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| 13 | <p>While there seems to be very sound planning in The Delivery Program and Operations Plans I am concerned about the urgent need for a complete road resurfacing of Drungall Avenue Corlette. Road maintenance crews have patched this road over the last 3-4 years and as well as looking unsightly the more worrying issue is that it seems very unstable. We live on the top corner of this street, fronting Corrie Parade and as it is a steep hill we are concerned about sink holes developing, which will likely impact on our property both physically and financially. There seems to be no mention of road maintenance for this area in the Council Plans. Please include this urgent maintenance requirement in the Plan for action. I would like a reply to this concern please.</p> |
| 14 | <p>Port Stephens council rate rise of 65% over seven years will increase the rates of a working class rate payer base to the levels paid by wealthy eastern suburb Sydney. At 7.5% per annum accumulating over 7 years brings my rates from just over \$1500 to over \$2500 at the end of the rate DEV cycle. Current Sydney rates increasing by 7.5% will be less than this. I am a military pensioner in a townhouse not a wealthy business man in a multimillion dollar mansion. This increase is unfair to the rate payers of Port Stephens.</p> |
| 15 | <p>Increase is far too much....and seems to be....implemented in a rather underhanded way.....I had no idea until I was told by someone else about This.....</p> |
| 16 | <p>I am responding to our Council's current "Wish List".</p> <p>Only 3 days to respond via "Have Your Say", only 3 towns for the Exhibition Period.....Not Nelson Bay on the Tomaree Peninsula area.....where the majority of Council rates come from.</p> <p>Council ignored 70% of respondents to the SRV on October 9, opposing any Special Rate Variation.</p> <p>Council has ignored the Number-one priority in each and every survey to build and repair our roads and not build new sporting fields and facilities. Our sporting fields and facilities are second-to-none compared to other areas in the Hunter Valley.</p> <p>Council has ignored clever technology in the construction and repairs of our roads.</p> <p>Council has ignored the fact that we have lived within our means for over 30 years, and has land and building assets in excess of \$100-\$150 million.</p> <p>Council has ignored that we are already paying 3% annually for a Drainage Levy.</p> <p>Council has ignored that in the past requested and had approved, a Business Levy for Commercially-rated properties. This is and was the correct action for these property owners, not residential ratepayers.</p> <p>Council has ignored that previous Port Stephens Councillors who strived to introduce a Tourism Levy. This was totally rejected and the current SRV is a Tourism Levy under a different guise.</p> <p>Council needs to return to reality, Roads, Rates, & Rubbish and stop spending our money in areas we should not.</p> |

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| 17 | <p>I am retired. This rate increase will cripple lots of residents in Port Stephens. I feel strongly that the rate increase should be in line with the CPI increase. House prices have dropped drastically & this increase will put further pressure on our citizens. I don't believe councillors have considered the aging population in this shire. Unfortunately I was not born with a silver spoon in my mouth, thus this increase will cause great hardship for my family. Why not leave rates as they are.</p> |
| 18 | <p>EcoNetwork-Port Stephens is a grassroots community-based environmental and sustainability network comprising 28 community and environment groups and eco-businesses with a focus on sustainable planning. We are non-party political and do not donate to political parties.</p> <p>I refer to the Strategic Asset Management Plan 2019-2029 Our Place Our Plan, Nov. 2018 revised to include the SRV. As part of the SRV, an allocation of \$200,000 is made for foreshore revetment and pathway works west of Thou Walla Sunset Retreat in Soldiers Point, with work not due to commence until 2021. Given that potential collapse of the slope risks pedestrian safety and permanent damage to the camp ground we ask that the revetment be made a priority capital works project, not contingent on approval of the SRV. However, if Council has determined that funding is dependent on the SRV, we request that the project be moved to the 2019/20 financial year.</p> |
| 19 | <p>I strongly oppose the rate increases proposed by PSSCouncil. This increase will impact on most ratepayers & cause stress, thus resulting in unpaid rates, family hardship & family breakdown. Does PSSC want these problems on their conscience? If these proposed increases were divulged prior to the Council Elections I am sure you would not be representing us. Why not cancel this proposal & take it to the next elections.</p> |
| 20 | <p>Cancel this proposed rate increase & take it to the next council elections. I am sure those of you in favour will not be representing PSSC.</p> |
| 21 | <p>That is the easy way ,taking more money out of the pockets of the rate payers and remember mostly, we are pensioners; they should invested wisely and also we don't need a new sport complex in Salamander Bay ,what we need is a better hospital.</p> |
| 22 | <p>Why are Port Stephens Council still going ahead with this after their own community consultation survey gave them a very strong no vote to this?? A lot of us cannot afford this rise. These rises will be passed on to every holiday accommodation in the area which will make our "holiday dependant" community even further behind places like Port Macquarie which due to highway fixes is now just up the road!!</p> |
| 23 | <p>This is an unaffordable solution to what the council want to do with our town. Council are not listening to the wider community.</p> |
| 24 | <p>The figures quoted for economic benefit are a sham - refer the opinion piece in Newcastle Herald 18/12/2018, and supplied by email. The studies and reports are all written to a consultant promoted recipe, based on faulty, unproven and incomplete logic.</p> <p>No greater proof of this point can be confirmed than by analyzing immediate results from the Maitland main Street and riverbank spending as well as the spending in Hunter and Scott Streets Newcastle.</p> <p>Council's nonproductive workforce has continued to grow. Before expecting the community to pay more there should be a fully professional productivity analysis on all Council spending, both rates and grants. This should involve time and motion studies, headcounts and consultancy payments review.</p> <p>The flashy variety of planning promoted by the SVR formula does the Shire little long</p> |

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| | <p>term benefit.</p> <p>It is promoted by short term populist thinking by people motivated by their own short term futures, whereas the safety of decent long term visionary planning and a stepped process will continue to provide certainty and attract long term external investment on a continuing basis. This applies particularly with planning for rural residential precincts.</p> <p>Until thinking such as this becomes the norm, any special rate increase will be wasted on short term patches requiring increased levels of maintenance, cost blowouts, wastage and projects based on misguided popularity or officer/councillor prejudice.</p> <p>Whilst the council maintains that the selected projects are based on community preference, the community has also recorded that it does not wish to pay any special rate variation, yet the council has proceeded with the application! How hard is it to understand this message?</p> <p>Council continues to assert purported facts without the necessary accompanying basis for the assertion - e.g. lowest rates in Lower Hunter but no details - is this base rate or ad valorem, and how does the land value participate. A commercial business making these sorts of claims would be prosecuted for misleading advertising.</p> <p>Councillors should take a long hard look at the advice they are being given by highly paid council officers who should know better than to promote half truths and clear deception. They are paid to provide sound experienced advice, and produce their own work, but have become servants and mouthpieces to the multitude of local government industry consulting leeches.</p> <p>Port Stephens has a lot of committed long term frontline personnel who continue to perform well, but just because things currently work, never means they cannot work better with a fresh broom through the place.</p> <p>I note the applications by many other Councils for SRV are accompanied by a statement of the efficiencies and savings attained prior to the request. I have not seen either this or any indication of this process in the Port Stephens application.</p> <p>Before allowing any SRV there should be a complete productivity review, and a realistic reassessment of the quality of planning we need, as well as the veracity of advice from senior council officers.</p> |
| 25 | <p>I strongly object to the Councils proposed special rate variation. It was clear through public consultation prior to the decision by Council that a very significant majority of ratepayers also objected to the size of the variation and yet Council pressed ahead anyway claiming support. I call on the Council to heed the feedback it has already been provided against the variation, withdraw the current proposal and come back with a more moderate version that ratepayers can afford.</p> <p>As the Council well knows from readily available demographic information, this LGA is not a well off area with many residents being pensioners, retirees on limited incomes and for those working, incomes are at the lower end of the range.</p> <p>I would also comment on the very limited advertising of the 3 consultation meetings and indeed the opportunity to make submissions. It is quite consistent with the high handed approach throughout this process.</p> |
| 26 | <p>I am opposed to the increases. The cost is too much and we already live in an amazing part of the world - no need for these fancy facility improvements.</p> |

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| 27 | <p>I strongly oppose the SRV proposal at the proposed level of increase as well as making the rate increase commutative and permanent especially in light of the overwhelming level of rate payer opposition. I have met no one who resides within the Port Stephens Council area who favours a rate increase of the type and level proposed. I have talked to people who simply cannot afford and increase at the levels proposed.</p> <p>I recommend that the Council select priority projects that will absorb only a part of the proposed increase (say an additional 2.5% above the normal increase for one year). I note that the submission does not prioritise the items in its submission along with corresponding estimates of the anticipated MEASURABLE benefits which is what should be considered. Then, after these projects are complete, the Council should provide an EXTERNALLY GENERATED report on the actual results achieved against the expected outcomes. If the results are satisfactory, the Council may wish to approach the ratepayers for a further increase in rates aligned with another suite of projects. In other words, develop a phased process that is affordable and produces the results promised in a measurable form. Rate payers would then be able to assess the value and outcomes of each increase.</p> <p>It is extremely ill-advised for the Council to take out loans that commit ratepayers to a stream of future obligations with respect to interest and repayment of principal. It is just a matter of time before interest rates rise and the burden faced by ratepayers will become more onerous.</p> |
| 28 | <p>I have and still remain totally opposed to the IP&R documents which represent a proposed increase of the rates of Port Stephens ratepayer.</p> <p>The proposed increases are manifestly unaffordable, particularly as they will be applied cumulatively over the proposed period.</p> <p>I have been one of around 90% of residents who have voiced my approval of the manner in which council has provided services over nearly 40 years of multi property rate paying.</p> <p>Only this week as reported in the Examiner was Council voted number 1 of all councils.</p> <p>If the proposal of rate increase was an Election issue at the last Council I would not have voted for it.</p> <p>I believe a new election of Councillors would remove proponents,</p> <p>A reported 70% of people rejected the initial proposal. You are not listening.....</p> |
| 29 | <p>This rate increase is totally overboard in how much it is. 2.5 % which is the cost of living is an appropriate raise</p> |
| 30 | <p>I strongly oppose the Special Rate Variation proposal in its current form.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Many residents, and I'm sure businesses, cannot afford the level of increase proposed. 2. The proposed 7.5% per annum, over 7 years, and to remain permanently is a massive and ongoing increase in rates for a council that was recently found 'fit for the future'. The proposal does include many projects that are needed or would be beneficial for the community but it does not have to be done all at once. A smaller increase initially with set outcomes and reviews that could then be followed by further approaches to the community for additional increases would, I'm sure, be more acceptable to rate payers. |

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| | <p>3. If the SRV is approved in its current form rate payers have no control over performance or lack thereof. If targets are not met each year there is no provision for stopping future SRV increases or rolling back previous SRV 7.5% increments.</p> <p>4. As much as I, and many people I know, would appreciate many of the projects, we would not want our council to borrow funds to complete these projects all together. We would be paying part of the increased rates to fund debt at a time of economic and financial uncertainty. I was raised to believe that you don't need the latest toy or renovation if you can't pay cash. I expect my council to also behave in a fiscally responsible and accountable manner.</p> |
| 31 | I believe the SRV is onerous and unfair to the majority of the community who can't afford it. I believe the projects should be rolled out over a longer time frame with less funding. |
| 32 | This plan is asking for funds that will not be spent as they should be. There is insufficient funding for environmental issues such as protecting the foreshore from sea level rise and provision of environmental staff to monitor and manage the marine and terrestrial environment. |
| 33 | <p>A rate rise of 7.5% each year for seven years is a ridiculous burden on homeowners.</p> <p>We have a council who had significant income from land developments and investments, why do they need even more?</p> <p>The council should be increasing levies on property developers building apartments with high densities.</p> <p>The tourist numbers continue to grow and these tourists do not pay for the facilities they use. A bed tax or levy n holiday apartments would be more appropriate than increasing rates for permanent residents.</p> <p>Stop this madness this a 33% increase in 7 years.</p> |

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 November 2018 5:40 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Rates Increase



[REDACTED] w portstephens.nsw.gov.au



PORT STEPHENS ANNUAL AWARDS 2018

NOMINATE TODAY

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 1 November 2018 3:34 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Rates Increase

To: Ryan Palmer & Wayne Wallis

I refer to the letter received with the Rates Notice regarding an increase in fees for (IPART) specific projects and infrastructure at Port Stephens.

As we are recent owners in the Port Stephens area, I believe the increase of 7.5% (per annum?) is extremely high. There are a lot of residences in this area to cover costs for improvements. Exactly what needs to be done and where these funds are proposed to be used, needs to be clearly communicated to all rate payers and voted on accordingly. Any sister city projects so government employees get a free trip overseas should be immediately abolished.

Notification of when the Community meetings are on, should also have been listed with the rates notice.

Again, a lesser per annum increase with more information of where the money will go is a better alternative.

A reply to this email with further information would be appreciated.

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 7 November 2018 5:42 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Attention Mayor Palmer and General Manager Wallis



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL



[REDACTED] | w portstephens.nsw.gov.au



PORT STEPHENS ANNUAL AWARDS 2018 NOMINATE TODAY

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 5 November 2018 1:46 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Attention Mayor Palmer and General Manager Wallis

Gentlemen;

I have received your letter accompanying the rate notice regarding a rate increase.

Most of us would agree that costs rarely fall, I accept that some form of increase might be justified.

Your letter says you are planning a rate increase of 7.5% per annum and it is to be implemented over the next seven years--how does that work?.

are you planning an increase of 1.021% per year for seven years or some residents will get an increase this coming year and others will progressively receive a rate hike?

Incidentally I should say that 7.5% is much higher than the CPI--is that fair?

Look forward to your response.

Sincerely

[REDACTED]



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Our future.
Our Port Stephens.

WHAT A JOKE!

Monday 22 October 2018

Dear resident,

Recently we wrote to all ratepayers in Port Stephens to ~~communicate~~^{enforce} our plans to ~~consider~~^{approve} an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) in 2019. A special rate variation means an increase in rates to deliver specific projects and infrastructure to the Port Stephens community.

We conducted extensive community consultation in July and August this year. This included over 20 community meetings, information booths and round table discussions across Port Stephens to seek views on a proposed rate increase. We received feedback in a variety of ways. We acknowledge that, whilst some in our community do not support increasing rates, there is strong support for improving infrastructure in Port Stephens, including better drainage, safer roads, revitalised town centres, more paths, cycleways and improved public amenities.

After reviewing what our community have told us they want, ~~we~~^(No high rise) have modified our proposal to better reflect desired priorities and concerns around affordability. This proposal was presented to Councillors at the Council meeting on 9 October.

At this meeting, Councillors ~~decided~~^{had already} to proceed with an application to IPART for a rate increase of 7.5% per annum, to be implemented over seven years and to remain permanently in the rate base. If approved, Council will be required to report to IPART each year to demonstrate how funds raised through the rate increase have been spent ~~in line with the original application~~.

What happens next?

on developers wishes.

We will prepare integrated plans to demonstrate how projects identified under this rate increase may be delivered over the coming years, and seek our community's feedback. From mid-November, we will be holding more community meetings to provide additional information on proposed projects and the benefits they can offer our community.

For more information, including a full report on consultation already carried out ^{to businesses} and a schedule of upcoming community consultation events, please visit our website at portstephens.nsw.gov.au or call us on (02) 4988 0255.

We ask community feedback BUT we will not listen!!

Yours sincerely,

Ryan

Ryan Palmer
MAYOR

(Temporary!)

Wayne

Wayne Wallis
GENERAL MANAGER

BASIC COUNCIL JOBS FOR EVERY TOWN

really! "Strong" argument against high rise also.

PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL

116 Adelaide Street
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

PO Box 42
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

p (02) 4988 0255
e council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au
ABN 16 744 377 876

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 17 November 2018 4:40 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: 'PSC2017-01717-001' - Proposed 7.5% increase in municipal rates by Port Stephens Council

I believe this proposed rate rise is unfair and totally unnecessary. The majority of house owners are quite content with things the way they are. We don't want the waterfront at Lemon Tree Passage changed. It is fine as it is. Council is responsible for roads and garbage collection and the present rates are more than enough to cover these essentials. I am sure homeowners in other parts of Port Stephens Council feel exactly the same. Most people came here because it is unspoilt and beautiful and quiet.

Raising the rates by 7.5% will cause hardship to

- young families purchasing their homes;
- elderly people on fixed incomes (remembering that many are pensioners who have not had a pension increase for years) and others are on superannuation payments which keep decreasing;
- people renting houses because their pension incomes have not increased for years, making it necessary for investors to sell their investment accommodation and the government having to provide housing for many, many people as the private investor will not be able to afford to carry this 7.5% cumulative rate increase.

Council is supposed to work for the residents of Port Stephens. It is supposed to budget its income and expenditure. It is not required to create lavish developments and town centres. That is for private enterprise.

Should Port Stephens Council make a rate increase of 2% in the next financial year it would gain more than enough to continue the necessary services that people require. 7.5% cumulatively per annum for 7 years will force people to sell and who would want to buy in a council with such ridiculously inflated municipal rates? Your proposal will cause hardship to many, many families.

Please think again!!!

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 20 November 2018 3:22 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Integrated Planning and Reporting documents revised to include the Special Rate Variation PSC2017-01717-001

The proposed rates increase 7% for 7 years is over the top when you consider 7% on top of 7% each year after the first year will lead to over 50% increase over the 7 years

I do not know of any wage increase that will keep any where near this and I am sure any business that can increase 50 % will be rare you obviously do not care for the residents of Port Stephens how they will pay this massive increase I am hoping that I have got the bull by tail and this is not what you have proposed could you let me know if I am wrong.

Thank you [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 15 November 2018 8:49 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Mayor: Stop the Port Stephens rate increase!

To Port Stephens Mayor & Councillors,

I just signed the petition "Mayor: Stop the Port Stephens rate increase!" Consider the first home buyers & elderly residents living on a budget.

Regards

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

181377832 (1)

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
Wednesday, 28 November 2018 10:17 AM

To:

SwitchPC

Subject:

SRV submission

To whom it may concern,

We are concerned about the road surface and corner safety at Nobles Road, Nelsons Plains.

The surface of the road is often pot-holed, the cattle grids have not been replaced adequately (2 are uneven), not enclosed properly = holes in the levee bank; and the road is 'sinking' at 16 Nobles Road.

On the Safety issues: there are no barriers or signage indicating river ahead if drivers fail to negotiate a corner. There has also been one reported suicide by vehicle near the Irrawang bridge and I suspect it is also a 'dumping' point for stolen vehicles.

It is also often a rubbish dump spot under the Irrawang bridge.

High voltage signs have been placed very close to the corner of Nobles road near the Irrawang bridge.

Thank you for your attention,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Nelsons Plains, 2324

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 28 November 2018 12:20 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Proposed SRV - PSC 2017-01717-001

To :The General Manager

I wish to lodge my objection to the Special Rates Variation proposal recently voted by Council to proceed to the next stage of exhibiting the SRV Integrated Planning and Reporting documents.

The proposed SRV as it stands fails to recognise the impact of the additional annual cost impact on Self-funded Retirees who receive a fixed income through Superannuation based Allocated Pensions. These pensioners face similar cost of living escalations and constraints to those of Centrelink defined "pensioners" (such as a Centrelink aged pension), and yet the SRV policy proposals do not contain any provision for Rates Assistance for those in receipt of Allocated Pensions. The level a superannuation based allocated pension is the result of long term financial planning which, in arguably all cases, fails to predict the significant impact on living costs arising from the random introduction of a Council rates initiative such as the proposed SRV.

The SRV objective of improving Council Infrastructure and Services may be commendable in some people's view. However, it comes at a significant cost to many of the Self-funded Retirees living in Port Stephens who fund their livings costs through hard earned Allocated Pensions, not the Public Purse.

At a minimum, the SRV amended Rates Assistance Program should include provisions for providing a similar level of financial assistance to Self-funded pensioners as there is proposed for Centrelink pensioners.

With thanks,

[REDACTED]
Raymond Terrace

Sent from my iPad

P.O. Box
Nelson Bay.

Dear Sir

As a resident of this wonderful part of the world I seems you are so keen to spoil it! High rises + rate rises are not acceptable.

I have attended many meetings to discuss both of these issues + as seniors now we have a desire not to turn this town into an overpopulated tourist mecca. They bring noise, road rage, drugs + theft!!

Yours sincerely,

MRS. [REDACTED]

181 578 141 (10)

From:

Sent:

To:

Subject:

[REDACTED]
Wednesday, 28 November 2018 5:25 PM

SwitchPC

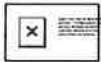
Integrated Planning and Reporting documents revised to include the Special Rate Variation PSC2017-01717-001

Dear Sir,

My wife and I formally protest the proposed rate hike which is a phenomenal amount when one calculates the total cost. As pensioners we are limited to spending within our means and we cannot rationally justify the inconvenience of this attack on our way of life.

As I understand it the money is to be spent disproportionately in "town centres" and for the interest of business people rather than a balanced spend. We are not interested in upgraded toilets etc in visitor areas and we will never see a benefit in this area. What about "user pays" – slug the people who are the major beneficiaries not pensioners in outlying areas who will not benefit at all from this.

I believe that the majority of ratepayers have already spoken?? Reconsider. Elections are closer than you realise.



Virus-free. www.avg.com

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
Friday, 30 November 2018 2:31 PM
SwitchPC
SVR

Last night I attended the information session on the SVR held at Birubi Surf Life Saving Club.

I thought Ryan Palmer and other Council representatives provided a good explanation of why the SVR is needed and how the extra funds will be spent.

I noted that the few vocal opponents to the SVR were also complaining that Council was not doing enough for them .

I wish to register my strong support for the SVR.

One of the projects involves upgrading of the public toilet blocks.

I have previously written to Council requesting more water drinking stations on our beautiful walking tracks.

When the toilets are upgraded could Council please include an external water fountain for each toilet block ?

Best Regards,

[REDACTED]



From:**Sent:****To:****Subject:**

Tuesday, 4 December 2018 6:09 PM

SwitchPC

Integrated Planning and Reporting documents revised to include the Special Rate Variation PSC2017-01717-001

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

We are totally opposed to this special variation which is totally exorbitant, unjustified and out of step with all rational economic measures such as the increase of CPI, wages etc. This will result in financial hardship and such a boast of excessive finances will need to gross waste and inefficiencies. The Council does not have a record of financial responsibility given the huge losses in court actions. No increases above the normal increase without a major independent review of the Council.

Rate payers have already indicated that they do not wish to have the increase but this has been ignored by Council. The Council has not even been prepared to hold a public meeting in Nelson Bay. This shows that they are not serious about consultation.

These views will be expressed to the Minister for Local Government and to IPART.



[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 7 December 2018 10:13 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Proposed 7.5 % rate increase.

This is a smoke screen that is covering up the real cost to the local rate payers.

Over the 7 years there will be a 77% increase in the actual rates paid to Council as it is compounded each year. Working on a rate payment on today of \$1730.00 by the end of 7 Years this will be \$2852.00 an increase of \$1333.00.

It is time you looked at the general waste in the council, as the state government said "that in today's world you must be lean and mean to exist",

where councils run in the opposite direction, with no accountability for costs.

You only have to watch your road gangs on the so called road repair, 1 Truck driver, 1 truck, 3 watching and 1 with a Shovel, the patch will come out in 3 days, and if it rains it will be out in 24 Hrs. so much for your qualified highly paid employees.

The work carried out on the intersection of Town Circuit and Salamander Way is a good example of the waste, Setting up fences, change and meal room.

Then there is the massive work force watching each other + 2 traffic controllers

What a complete mess, causing accidents and then needing a second attempt to try and correct, I hope the person who designed this was sacked, I guess not.

The break down of cost would be 85% wages, 10% materials and 5% to set up camp.

As for putting on a manager to run the council as a business, this is a complete failure and must have added 1 Million to the running cost.

In the commercial field the council could only exist for 6 months before going under.

Get your house in order before you come crying to the rate payers.

A Very annoyed rate payer

[REDACTED]

Sent from Mail for Windows 10



This email has been checked for viruses by AVG antivirus software.

www.avg.com

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 9 December 2018 10:19 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Re: SRV Option 3
Attachments: 180801 Central Park 4.jpg; 180801 Central Park 2.jpg; 180801 Central Park 3.jpg

I wish to encourage Council to give a higher priority within proposed parks & recreational improvements to replace the "tired" and dilapidated BBQ and picnic furniture in Central Park (at south rear of Weatherly Close in Nelson Bay). See attached photos.

These facilities I believe have been in service since the 1980's and long overdue for an upgrade. Council recently replaced the picnic table with another old recycled one but the BBQ, which still operates OK (sort of) and used regularly by residents and visitors, is in a very poor state of repair. Especially the unhealthy and Cockroach domain food preparation area. Cracked and broken tiles etc. The Koppers Log roof is also in a dangerous state of collapse or wind damage if not soon replaced. There is no sun shade over the current picnic table.

Total replacement with a new stainless steel BBQ and aluminium picnic table both with metal sheet roofing is long overdue and I urge Council to move this replacement up the list of priorities within the current works program and not wait until the SRV is approved.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

180801 Central Park 4.jpg
180801 Central Park 2.jpg
180801 Central Park 3.jpg

Note: To protect against computer viruses, e-mail programs may prevent sending or receiving certain types of file attachments. Check your e-mail security settings to determine how attachments are handled.







From:

Sent:

To:

Subject:

Sunday, 9 December 2018 12:07 PM

SwitchPC

HPE CM: For Ryan Palmer.

Hi Ryan,

I missed making a submission on the survey about the rate rise. Was visiting friends in Ncle last week & asked what their rates are. 2 live on ordinary streets in Merewether & pay \$4000 a year which is more than twice what we pay. I agree to the rise though would have prob chosen 5%. Places like the Tomaree Sports Complex certainly need an upgrade. Even John Nell who comes to our reserve meetings agrees that a lot of projects have been put on the back burner.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I am one of many who is
against the 7.5% rate rise over
7 years

Council rates are only one cost
in owning a house.

Council must live within
its means just as we have to.

[REDACTED]

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| STEPS TO COUNCIL | |
| C. Council Relations | |
| 11 DEC 2018 | |
| File No. | |
| Action by | |
| Date | |



MISSION Community, working together for events, environment & heritage.



Tanilba Bay



SRV workshop 10th Dec 2018

Thank you all for attending our SRV workshop. It must feel like a very long road for all: mayor, councillors and staff. We thought the community most of whom had not been to other workshops worked well together. While they were passionate it was easily directed and they strongly showed they cared about their peninsula. Several difficult issues were aired and people we spoke to went away happy with council responses. We particularly thank council for presenting **yet one more session for us**. This is open government from our perspective and the core business of Port Stephens Council. It is the only way to engender trust and ongoing relationships. We hope we can keep something of this meeting in the future. **Perhaps a similar meeting could report to the community on the progress of the project in say 3 years**. Thanks also to Robyn for her power point presentation that grounded the discussion.

There will be several submissions from different groups but we write to register this submission from the whole of community workshop as agreed by members present on the night, trying to capture points raised. Fifty people signed our attendance sheet but there were more outside- the best attended SRV we believe.

Tilligerry is really one interwoven community with one school, one major shopping centre, one ambulance station, one deep water port. Some of us have glimpsed the cover or part of the document tabled by at various meetings. Some of the same projects like pathways were mentioned on the night and in this submission. We do not feel the toilet/marine rescue building right on the beach in Henderson Park or moving the old buildings to take over McCann Park are practical proposals.

We also feel that the community and council staff should be the steering committee not self- or mate selected individuals with few links to active council groups.

We think that the community was pretty stirred up and that councillors and staff would agree that the community was calling for Tilligerry be dealt with as a whole and transparently in the following projects.

1. **Town Centre Enhancement**- The meeting's expectation was that the \$2m be for both communities. We request you change the IPART wording to Town Centre enhancement projects in both Tanilba Bay and Lemon Tree Passage with individual projects being judged on their merits.
2. **Community Meeting**- supports the formation of Tilligerry Peninsula Strategic Consultative Committee (TPSCC) through a community EOI of active groups which is the normal process we believe used in similar circumstances in Medowie et al. We particularly would appreciate some representation from Salt Ash and Oyster Cove as part of the geographic peninsula as this is the environment that we are trying to protect. The TPSCC would need to hold regular community information sessions.

There was a common feeling on the night that banners and similar projects should not be considered.

As well we would be happy to run a community meeting annually to plan community events, working bees etc.....it wouldn't take much encouragement to re-establish this process. A council staff member could come and tell those present what council is planning etc

3. **Shared Path**- Mallabula to Lemon Tree Passage on Lemon Tree Passage Rd path needs to incorporate extension to work around the shops in Tanilba Bay, around the pond in Mallabula as well as the road widening on Lemon Tree Passage Rd and perhaps small modification in Lemon Tree but this can be staged.....will this change IPART?

4. **Foreshore Paths**- The Swan Park to Sailing Club and Henderson Park to Rudd Reserve pathways should be unchanged- both are essential as soon as possible.

5. **Comprehensive Tilligerry Plan**- We have been asking for some planning from the councillor for years but he says that *There is no development pressure*. This we argue is the time to make a plan. You can't do it after a major development is proposed. There is a desperate need to plan for the environment and for protection of heritage, social services etc. We need a plan to shape our future...not a string of unrelated projectsas soon as possible certainly with 2 years. Perhaps this could be role of TPSCC mentioned in 2.

6. **Sunset Park erosion- Coastal and estuarine environment-** Coastal etc Planning needs to recognise the erosion at Sunset Park at the same time as on the foreshore at Tanilba Bush Foreshore and Caswell Reserve.

7. **Drains-** Most drains used to be creeks. We are told that council can only spray the floor of the drain and if that is being done it is hard to explain why our drains with collapsing sides are full of weeds which are transferred from drain to drain by mowing and management. Banks should not be destabilised and natural elements should be left where possible. They should be managed as closely as possible as creeks. Native ferns are being removed leaving faster, larger-growing introduced weeds to take over.

8. **Environment-** Port Stephens Council LGA is taking the environment which brings most of the residents and visitors for granted. Perhaps this feeling is not helped on Tilligerry by the two massive bushfires. It is hard to see how we can talk about caring for the environment when we have had devastation. The Office of Environment and Heritage Koala Strategy meeting [redacted] went to talked about getting RFS to see koala habitat as worth protecting- just a little late but essential!! Of course we have to protect human life and property but putting the fire out as soon as possible has to be enforced. It is clearly **NOT** the current process.

Council in Delivery Programs and Operational Plans states *ecological sustainable development should be formally identified as a key component* and lists *develop and implement environmental projects to protect and enhance – wetlands and bushland, koala conservation and coastal and estuarine environments*. Communities should be informed and involved in these as soon as possible. We are planning an environment workshop with a focus on koala tree planting with Port Stephens Koalas and Tilligerry Landcare in March and would love to talk to responsible staff.

9. **Communication-** When [redacted] drove through Miriam Vale in Qld last year she photographed their processes in updating a park and sent them to Port Stephens Council. Got no response she thinks. A large white board in the park said WE ARE UPDATING YOUR PARK (see plans at.....) KEY STAGES 1. toilet demolished 6th May etc ... To be completed ... ticked off when done. This worked beautifully there. It could be a requirement on the contractors and to fix it if it was broken.

10. **Public Transport-** When should there NOT be a bus stop at the main shops? NEVER we would have said. We almost had a bus stop on LTP Rd near Coles. The crazy part was that the high school kids bus kept stopping there which the kids loveduntil someone decided that this was unfair....so the high school bus had to drive to the next stop and the kids walk back.... like the adults.

11. **Mallabula Hall-** This needs doing up but since this WAS going to be the Tilligerry Community Centre the process should be part of the work of the whole community meeting- at TPSCC with Mallabula Hall Committee??? This process needs to be as open as possible.

12. **Across Peninsula Meetings-** This meeting has underlined the need for community to work together to break down isolation wherever possible. It would be wonderful if Council would facilitate this...not exploit it.

13. **Koalas-** Koalas will never survive only on council land on Tilligerry or anywhere else. Port Stephens Council needs to act for all of Port Stephens LGA by requiring/requesting other land holders to take responsibility for gates not being closed, dumping of waste, bushfire on land belonging to other stakeholders; crown land, Hunter Water, Worimi etc. Council needs to be working with all stakeholders on habitat protection issues to save Tilligerry koalas.

14. **Trees-** Trees take too long to grow to let them be removed willy-nilly. We are losing community trees every day. (Often at the weekend when you can't ring council to check the owner has permission). We have gone from remnant native habitat like Eastern Suburbs to poorer parts Western Sydney- and many parts of Western Sydney has street trees. There was recently a large 100 year old non native removed in Lemon Tree Passage because it was in the way (a bit) of a new fence which caused no end of community angst.

Several months ago 2 large koala food trees were removed in Blanch Street LTP (by accident???) and 10 had to be planted on the nearby foreshore in their place for each- there should be more publicised incidents like this. We are told this is the policy. If so could someone spell it out for us? We are also told now that it is illegal to remove Christmas bush- what else? you ask. Some community education is needed.

Nearby councils when they engage in community improvement plant street trees. Then they allocate funds to maintain them. Street trees immediately add shade. They define where it is safe for kids to play. They get locals interested in caring for their 'new' land between their front fence and the tree. Then they bring birds and even

provide a refuge for a koala. They let drivers know where they can drive. They slow down traffic. Locals even take pride in their part of the corridor. Houses look better. Gardens get cared for.

Koala food trees take years to mature enough to be grazed by koala so we really have to start now and keep going. WE have shown at Sunset Park the faster way to regrow habitat is to fence off patches from mowing and weed them while the seeds in the ground emerge.

Orange has the most beautiful street trees- it is simply an investment in community (AND environment- no koalas but air and water quality etc).

While we were packing up the hall after the meeting we heard a koala in one of the three old trees in Tanilba Park. No new trees being planted! Very few koala feed trees on the safe foreshore. They were cleared by Parks and Reserves years ago!!! Sad.

15. Haig Hexagon- The northern end of Ave of the Allies at the Water Gate is in need of ongoing safety precautions. Children cross this every day. Drivers on Ave of the Allies have to swing their vision through 270 degree to see cars on Diggers and Ave of the Allies (often driving too fast into a blind corner). It may have a low accident statistic and has had some improvements but needs more).

16. Parking in Pres Wilson Walk- It has been well established that cars slow down in a crowded street. President Wilson Walk is a wide street with off-road parking on both sides. In Raymond Terrace or Nelson Bay there would be some parking on the street as well which is perceived by drivers as congestion and they slow down. Can some of the on-road parking be opened up?

17. Events Management- This needs more staff and better processes. After 10 years of applying, we at [redacted] put our events application for Henderson Park in to council in May. Two weeks from the festival we wrote to Rachel to say we were going to have people away could we get the paperwork done with them earlier. No reply. In the last week we suddenly get asked for the map. Then the risk assessment...The day before we were told that 2 of our food stalls did not have paperwork (they found it). Some things are last minute like the list of food stalls...but surely someone can sit down when the application is put in and say..Here's your list of outstanding items.... map etc. We mentioned to Rachel that there is really a need for some training in this for volunteers. There has to be ways to make it easier for community groups.

Our Council events bill for Tillifest was \$1039 (admin \$60, Site hire \$323(What does that cover?), electrical inspection \$370, Electricity use \$36 and bins \$250 (no one asked us how many we wanted)). Luckily Rachel could absorb that \$370 because we had no notice of that charge. Of course we had a grant so we could bill the council for that. Is this the best way to work? We apply for a cultural grant of \$3000 grant and pay \$1000 to another part of council? Where is the incentive for community groups to arrange events in parks?

None of the above explains why we then found about 7pm as it got dark that the lights in the toilet were out and we had no way of finding out what was wrong with them or how we might turn them on or if they had been off for weeks. Nor have we found out more in response to our enquiries. They were fixed days later after complaints.

18. Drain covers etc- Part of the SRV mentions drain covers which are broken and askew across parts of Tanilba Bay in need of levelling and repair. The fragile log barriers in Henderson Park are more in need of a new system than the BBQ which is listed for replacement. In 2016 a teenager caught her leg on an exposed screw. Council replaced most. In 2018 we rang council about 2 broken ones and repaired one ourselves only to have one broken near the BBQ on the night of the festival. There are similarly rotted sagging logs in Mallabula Sportsfield car park in need of new. The lights in Henderson Park mostly do not work- we are told the underground wiring is rusted out.

19. Trees in parks- Trees are why we have parks and shade and birds and koalas. Council mowing practices reduce our parks to short buffalo grass and old trees- no biodiversity. Council Recreation Services doesn't even think biodiversity is a factor in their processes. We think every park should have some long native grass, some shrubs, some young and old trees. We are worried that this rate rise will increase tree loss and leave us shadeless and koalaless. Volunteers REALLY can't plant koala trees in parks without council support. Council can. We hope you do.

[redacted]

Signed by [redacted] in present at SRV meeting.

18/415 856 (18)
1/3

12 December 2018

To: Port Stephens Council
116 Adelaide Street / P.O. Box 42 Raymond Terrace
Raymond Terrace, NSW, 2324

Re: Special Rate Variation Proposal

Dear Sirs,

I am a private citizen retired and living in Nelson Bay.
I have never donated money to any political organisation.
I am writing to express my serious concerns over the special rate variation proposed by council.

As well as being adversely affected by this proposal I also believe that it meets none of the requirements set out in the IPART website. Below I have listed those requirements and added my concerns in italics to each of them.

"Council requests for Special Variations are often in order to develop or maintain essential community services or regional projects." (IPART SRV Web Site)

There are no essential community services in Port Stephens that are either in jeopardy or that require the proposed level of SRV that has been specified by the council's public information booklet. There are also no regional projects at risk or even listed in the council's information booklet. In fact a recent council survey indicated that residents were reasonably happy with all the services that the council provides.

Councils need to show IPART there is: (IPART SRV Web Site)

- **community awareness of their plans**

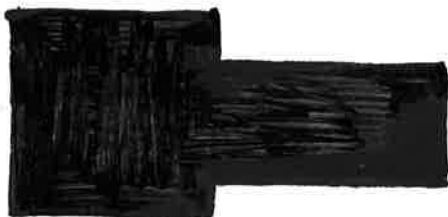
The information provided to justify this increase to the community is, in the current version, entirely web based and is misleading and contradictory. (Examples Appendix 1 below). In a letter to all residents the council has claimed "over 20 community meetings" when in fact there were only 9 council organised community meetings, all others being merely poorly attended "drop-in booths". The letter also claims "strong support" for infrastructure (un-quantified and evidence free) but does not claim support for the rate rise. Whereas the proposal has been put forward as a series of "options" for the community to indicate their preference for, the council has itself chosen "option3" (66% cumulative rise) without collecting, showing or referring to the community's indicated preferences.

I regard all this as being a failed community collaboration at best and an attempt to falsify community feelings at worst.

- **a demonstrated need for higher increases to charges**
With no essential community services in jeopardy and no regional projects indicated there can be no demonstration of need for higher increases to charges.
- **a reasonable impact on ratepayers**
*A 66% cumulative increase in council rates in a council precinct with such a high percentage of fixed income residents **is not** a reasonable impact on ratepayers! An initial 40% of the respondents objecting to the SRV, which numbered 60% of total respondents, with more submissions to come, have claimed financial hardship as their reason for rejecting the proposal.*
- **a sustainable financing strategy**
Both the mayor and the services manager have previously stated publicly that grants will be needed to finance the stated plans.
- **a history of well-documented council productivity improvements**
These have been claimed but not widely documented and, to my knowledge, no evidence has been published.

In addition to the non compliance of the above conditions the council, throughout its community consultation process, has spoken only about what I would call "nice to have" benefits such as street beautification, "gateways", parks and cycle ways etc. So it is reasonable to assume that the council itself sees no threat to "essential community services" and therefore the premise of its request is false.

Yours Sincerely,



Appendix 1

Example a)

An example confusion over actual expenditure and therefore cost to residents and rate payers springs from the apparent contradictory figures quoted for "sports facilities upgrades" as exemplified below....

- Council web site information booklet (on line): \$3m "one off cost"
- November 18 pdf booklet Delivery Program and Operational Plans: \$6.8m
- Same document as above; "Loan 'draw down' \$40m over 4 years".
- No matter how these figures are read or interpreted, together they represent 49% of the entire SRV over the next 7 years and *must* be a consideration in the circumstances of an extraordinary rate rise!

The sports complex issue is further clouded by the planned relocation of the Tomaree council depot at a cost of \$5m who's current location is where a part of the sports complex is proposed on drawings. The reasons for this relocation have been offered as efficiency based but the "new" location is further from Nelson Bay and no closer to Raymond Terrace!

Example b)

The openly discussed potential legal cost of \$20m (Fairfax media) is neither acknowledged nor denied by council but must be a consideration in the circumstance of an extraordinary rate increase.

Example c)

The multiple sourcing and confusing nature and complexity of the public information provided by the council draws a justifiable suspicion of the duplicity or incompetence of this council.

30th November, 2018

Attention: Mr Ryan Palmer,
Mayor,
Port Stephens Council,
P.O. Box 42,
RAYMOND TERRACE. 2524



Dear Mr Palmer,

I am writing to you regarding the intention of the Council to increase our rates on a yearly basis 7.5% for approximately the next 7 years or so. Such an increase outside of normal inflation rates is totally irresponsible and an absolute burden to rate payers, many of whom will be Self Funded Retirees, especially in the Nelson Bay Precinct.

Who knows what is going to happen over the next 7 years? Interest rate hikes, general inflation increases in all other charges, massive unemployment? not to mention a change of government to an irresponsible Labor Party who have vowed to attack Self Funded Retirees.

You are a reasonably young man Mr Palmer, so you do not understand the hardships that you intend inflicting on an electorate that well may be struggling in another 2 years time. I very much doubt that have have even seen severe poverty like I saw and experienced as a young girl in the early 50's and 60's. Yes, I am a "Baby Boomer" and I made good because I worked hard and saved hard to enjoy the later part of my life, so why punish us with your "pie in the sky" ideals.

Mr Palmer, get a budget and stick to it! Please stop selling off Community Land so that you can fund your excessive ideals. Have a careful think about the type of Legacy you are going to leave behind. "Karma" always get's the greedy ones!

Regards, /

A large, dark, irregular blacked-out area that completely obscures the signature of the sender.

Postal Address:

A large, dark, irregular blacked-out area that completely obscures the postal address of the sender.

[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
Wednesday, 12 December 2018 7:30 PM

To:

SwitchPC

Subject:

RESPONSE TO SRV EXPENDITURE

[REDACTED]
Phone: [REDACTED]

I am responding to our Council's current "Wish List".

Council ignored 70% of respondents to the SRV on October 9, opposing any Special Rate Variation.

Council has ignored the Number-one priority in each and every survey to build and repair our roads and not build new sporting fields and facilities. Our sporting fields and facilities are second-to-none compared to other areas in the Hunter Valley.

Council has ignored clever technology in the construction and repairs of our roads.

Council has ignored the fact that we have lived within our means for over 30 years, and has land and building assets in excess of \$100-\$150 million.

Council has ignored that we are already paying 3% annually for a Drainage Levy.

Council has ignored that in the past requested and had approved, a Business Levy for Commercially-rated properties. This is and was the correct action for these property owners, not residential ratepayers.

Council has ignored that previous Port Stephens Councillors who strived to introduce a Tourism Levy. This was totally rejected and the current SRV is a Tourism Levy under a different guise.

Council needs to return to reality, Roads, Rates, & Rubbish and stop spending our money in areas we should not.

[REDACTED]

[Redacted]

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, 12 December 2018 8:51 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: SRV Submission
Attachments: Tilligerry Forward (1).docx

General Manager at Port Stephens Council,
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

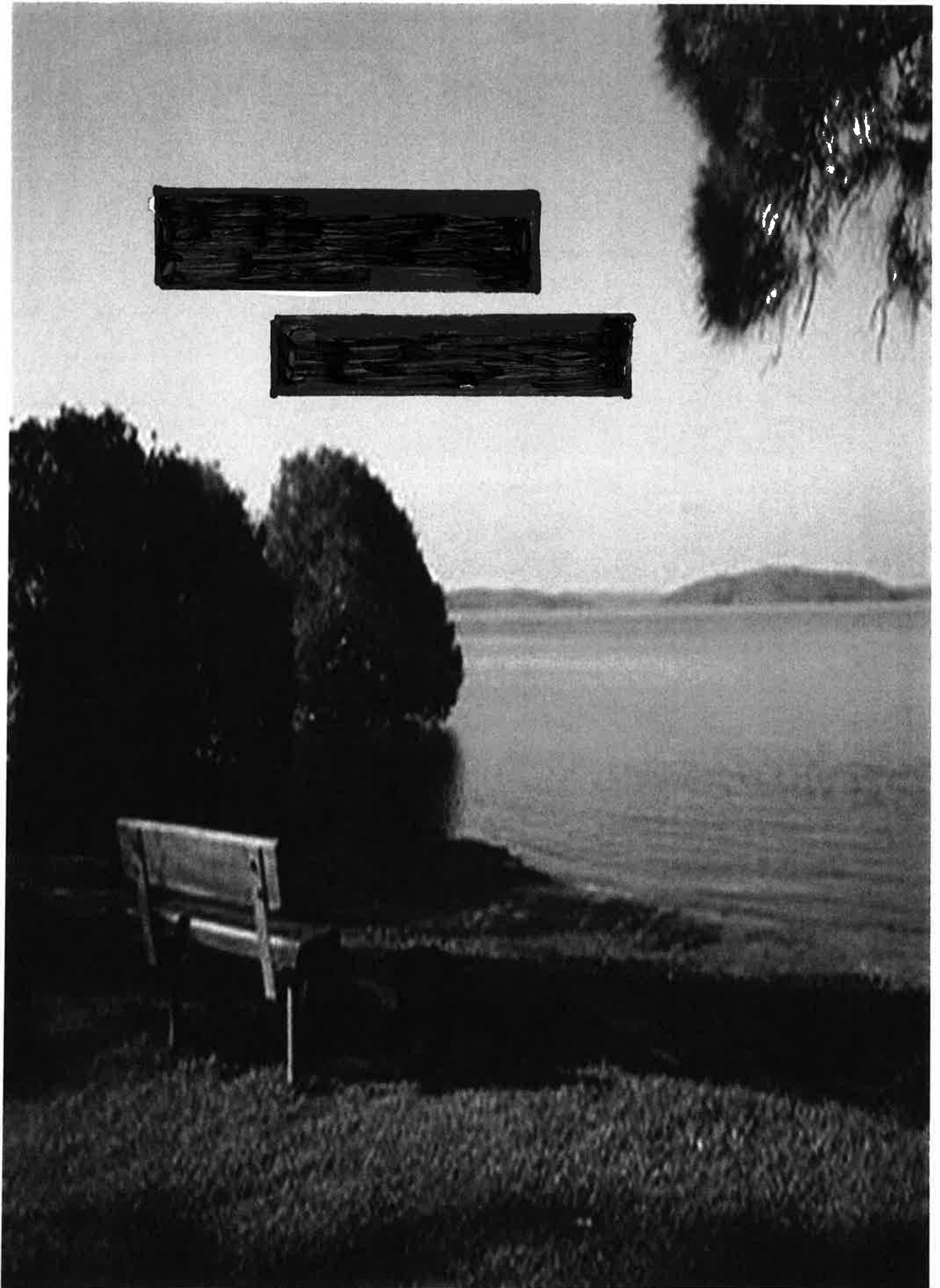
File number: **PSC2017-01717-001**

Please find attached a submission for the Special Rate Variation from the [Redacted]
[Redacted] as endorsed at our November meeting.

Regards

[Redacted]

Chairman



Background

Port Stephens Council will shortly submit a proposal for a 7.5% Special Rate Variation (SRV) to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). If successful, the program of works will be commenced in the 2019/20 financial year and continue over the following seven years. This presents a unique opportunity to provide sustainable economic and social benefits to our community by improving and upgrading infrastructure and community spaces, and by funding major events and activities.

A white paper was endorsed by a meeting of community representatives and presented to the Mayor for Council consideration in allocation of SRV funds. The submission outlined new capital works projects and upgrades to existing facilities across the Peninsula.

The Tilligerry subsequently secured approximately \$4m for SRV capital projects and progressed several projects in the existing council capital works program.

Separate (shire wide) funds for event sponsorship and ongoing maintenance and upgrade of existing facilities have also been established. Submissions are currently in preparation for these.

The Vision

The Tilligerry Peninsula is a geographic unit of land made up of 4 villages - Tanilba Bay, Mallabula, Lemon Tree Passage and Oyster Cove. It is important additional Council and added grant funding are spread across the peninsula so that all residents share the economic and social benefits.

To implement this, a steering committee has been formed, made up of a broad a range of representatives of the Tilligerry Peninsula community who will address the following issues:

Connectivity – Roads and Pathways

Community - Culture, Heritage, Sport Youth and Environment

Town Revitalisation and Street Beautification

Land Use Planning and Zoning

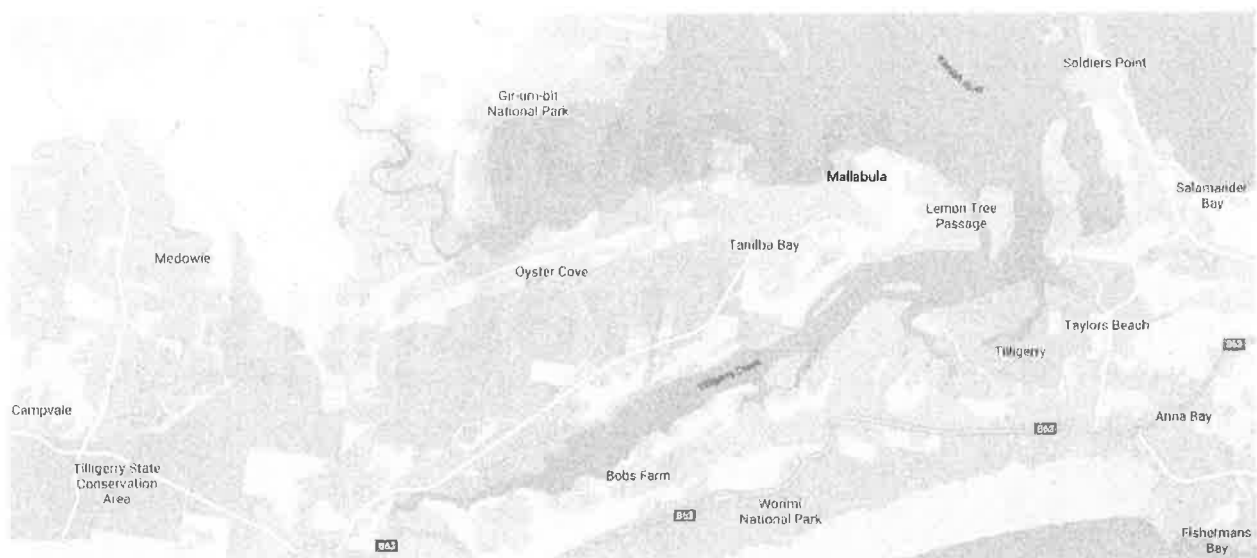


Figure 1. The Tilligerry Peninsula

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Town Revitalisation and Street Beautification

Lemon Tree Passage - The Town Focus

CBD Square – The Meeting Place

Lemon Tree Passage is a coastal village on the Tilligerry Peninsula located on the southern shores of Port Stephens New South Wales. Tilligerry Creek and Port Stephens delineate the Peninsula. As shown by the location plan below, LTP is supported by other centres on the Peninsula namely; Mallabula, Tanilba Bay, Oyster Cove, Swan Bay and Salt Ash.

The name Lemon Tree Passage (LTP) is also given to the waterway between the Town Centre and Bulls Island to the East. This passage of water provides secure harbour for 52 commercial moorings mostly for private vessels. The Lemon tree Passage Taxi has approval to operate from there. A public jetty, boat ramp and several oyster leases are located on Tilligerry Creek and Lemon Tree Passage and shape the economic and recreational character of the village.

The intersection of Meredith Street and Cook Parade is seen as a natural site for a central tourism and entertainment and dining hub for the Tilligerry Peninsula. It is proposed to redevelop and suitably landscape this intersection and surrounds as the town centre.

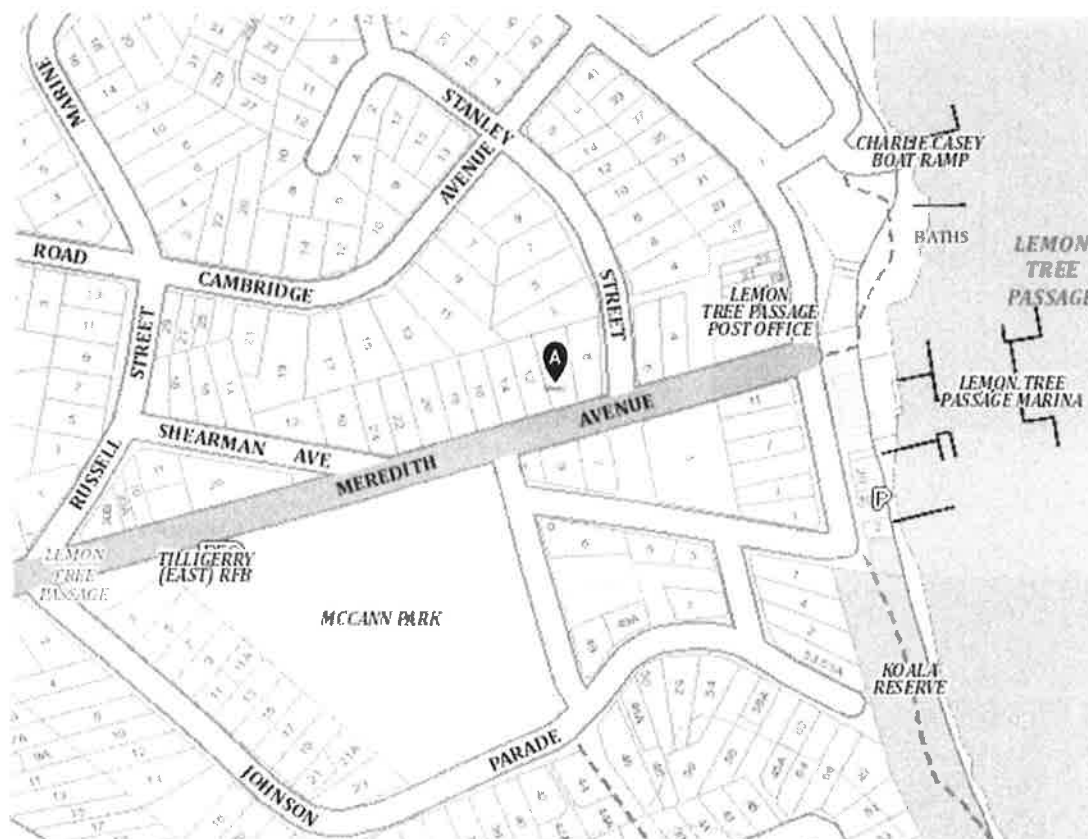


Figure 2. Lemon Tree Passage – Town Centre



Figure 3. Lemon Tree Passage CBD Redevelopment Area - Current



Figure 4. Possible Town Square and Sidewalk Dining options



Figure 5. Possible CBD Intersection Upgrade

Henderson Park – Waterfront Entertainment Precinct

Adjacent to the intersection of Meredith Street and Cook Parade is Henderson Park. This park has been substantially redeveloped in recent years with new boat launch ramps, pontoons, music shell, BBQ's and enclosed pool. The park is seen as an extension of the Town Square and attracts locals and visitors.



Figure 6. Possible Henderson Park Picnic Facilities

A Waterfront Splash Pad

It is proposed to construct a splashpad on the waterfront on parkland to the north of the boat ramp. This will add to the park facilities and draw residents and visitors to underutilised park areas.



Figure 7. Bright Splash Pad – The Gold Standard

Pool Deck Shade Sail

A shade sail is required to cover the raised deck adjacent to the pool.



Figure 7a. A Polyedge Structure covering most of the larger deck

This option is expensive (at an estimated \$76,240), however would integrate best with the playground structure. Concerns are the footing requirements due to reclaimed ground and proximity to the waterway. Support poles would be 250mm to match the playground.

Relocation of the Marine Rescue Base to Henderson Park

The current amenities building at Henderson Park adjacent to the boat launching ramp is slated for redevelopment. As part of this redevelopment, it is proposed to relocate the Radio Control Room to this building - as has been done in several coastal NSW towns. This will benefit both the Marine Rescue Service by increasing their visibility and presence (and rescue response times) and the community by providing active supervision of the launching ramp and park amenities.



Figure 8. Marine Rescue atop park amenities – Trial Bay

Parking

To cater for larger events and in the longer term allow for future growth of the CBD it is proposed to use the unformed section of Stanley Street for additional parking. Stanley Street was set aside for this purpose some 12 years ago by council.

The site is conveniently located midway between the waterfront precinct and the proposed McCann Park heritage village.

The site should comfortably allow for 36 standard rear to the curb parking spaces, including two disabled spaces.

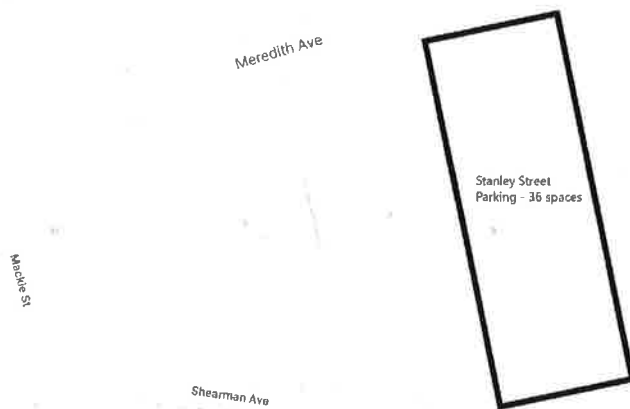


Figure 9. Lemon Tree Passage - Stanley Street Overflow Parking

Tanilba Bay – Gateway to the Peninsula

Tanilba Bay is the gateway to the Tilligerry Peninsula and is the commercial hub of the Peninsula. The shopping centre, primary school, Fire Station, Ambulance Station, Tanilba House and the Halloran stone structures are here.

Welcome Statement

Visitors are welcomed to the Tilligerry Peninsula by the historic Tanilba Gates and somewhat less historic roundabout.

It is proposed to create a centrepiece for the roundabout highlighting and the historic and cultural background of the peninsula. This centrepiece and the gates will be lit at night and suitably landscaped.

The Flagpoles on the gates will be restored and be capable of operation from ground level. Flags will be flown on weekends and special occasions.



Figure 10. Tilligerry Roundabout with possible centrepieces

Tanilba Shopping Precinct

President Wilson Walk between Lemon Tree Passage Road and its Pershing Place intersection is the main commercial street of Tanilba Bay. A general softening of this thoroughfare is proposed including making the visual impact of the old Tilligerry Plaza less intrusive.



Figure 11. Tanilba Bay Commercial Centre - President Wilson Walk

Culture and Heritage

The Village Green – McCann Park

The Village Green will be a multifunctional space providing a focus for community life and gathering. The Village Green will be of a size that can be utilised by the local community for exercise, exhibitions and events. Within the park existing mature trees will be retained where possible.

Community facilities are also proposed within the Park with the prospect for a cafe to be incorporated allowing alfresco opportunities to spill over and integrate with the space. Children will be able to play, while their parents share a coffee with friends in a safe, attractive and family friendly setting.

Furthermore, the Community facilities can be converted to markets or a meeting area on weekends, special occasions and/or evenings. The local car club has already expressed interest in this venue as a potential location for a monthly “show and shine”.

Delivery of the Plan will rely on the cooperation of a range of stakeholders including Council, State and possibly Federal Government, the private sector and the community. The project will commence with simple changes to the current layout and services but will then roll out with medium and long-term actions.

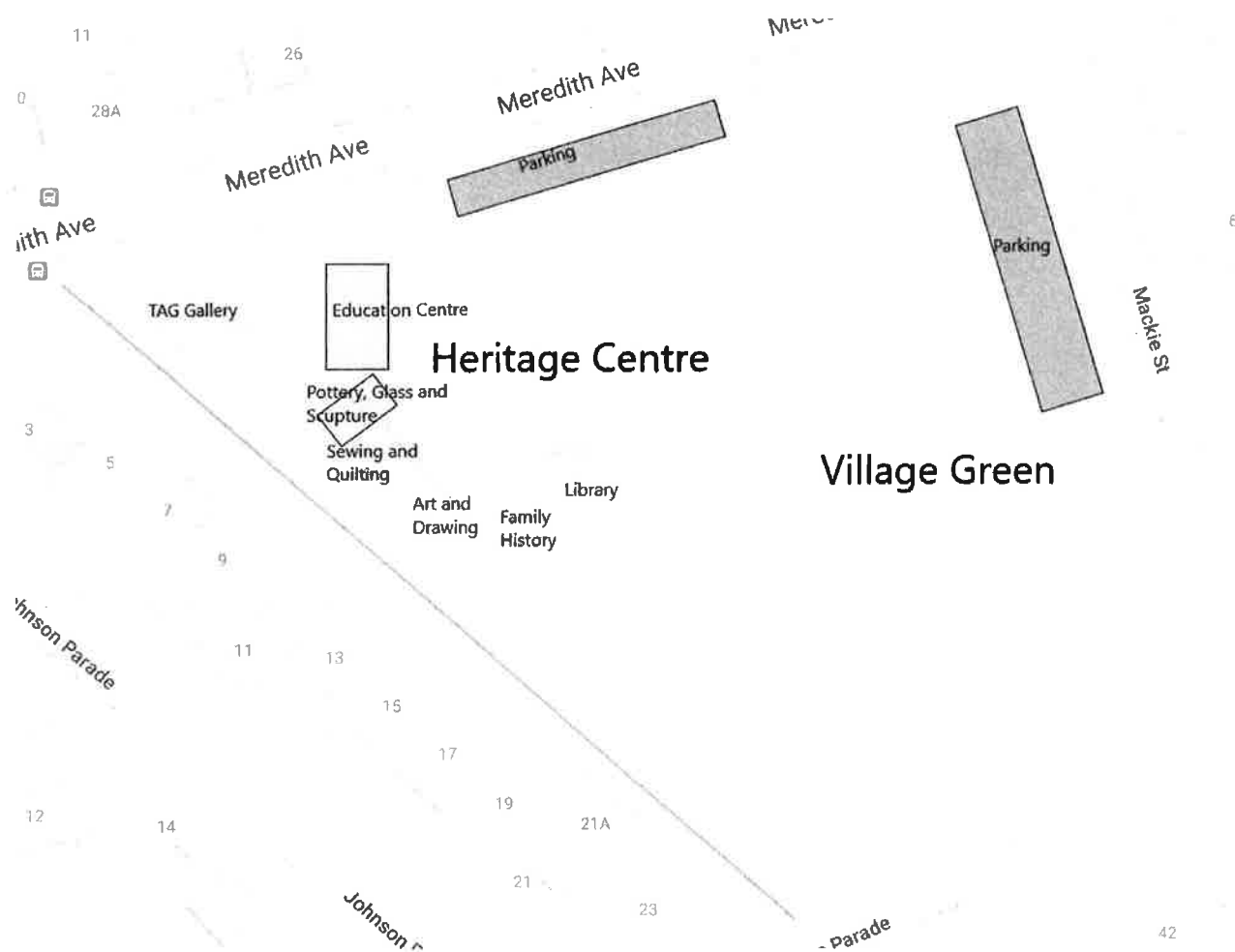


Figure 12. McCann Park showing possible layout

The Heritage Village – McCann Park

The concept of a “Heritage Village” has often been discussed as a means of delivery of the vision of a sustainable arts and craft centre.

It is proposed to physically relocate several existing community buildings to McCann Park to provide the basic structure. These will join the existing TAG Fire Station building. The relocated buildings (and new additions) will be arranged in such a way as to give the look and feel of a “Heritage Village” – similar to that of the “Old School Centre”. New structures will be constructed to blend with existing buildings.

The Old Lemon Tree Fire Station

This is an existing building became vacant following the amalgamation of the Lemon Tree Passage and the Tanilba Bay/Mallabula Rural Fire Service Brigades. Recently refurbished by Council, it is now home to the Tilligerry Art Group, which relocated an existing shop and gallery in Tanilba Bay.

The Tilligerry Library

Relocation of this building is proposed as the first stage. The sale of the existing site will provide seed funding for the project. The Library is run by the Tilligerry Adult Education group (TACE) and is located on Cook Parade, adjacent to McCann Park.

Lemon Tree Passage Old School Centre

The Family History Building

This as a substantial building and would require partial dismantling. As it is wooden framed, relocation is possible with some effort.

The Sewing, Quilting and Leadlight Rooms

This was brought to Lemon Tree School as a demountable and relocation would be straightforward.

The Art Room

This is a more substantial building but could be relocated.

New Buildings

Workshop and Education Centre

It is proposed to provide an open plan building for education, workshops, lectures, small functions and meetings.

Stone, Glass and Clay Workshop Centre

It is proposed construct a building for dedicated use by sculptors, potters and glass artists. This would incorporate a kiln and a public viewing area for demonstrations by artisans.

Parks and Reserves

Caswell Reserve Redevelopment

A draft masterplan has recently been released for the waterfront park and boat launch ramp at Caswell Reserve.

The park will be completely redesigned, with the current toilet block, parking area and playground demolished and relocated. The carpark and entrance road will be sealed. This will provide a much safer environment for users and improved access to the launch ramp.

As part of the SRV pathway project, a shared pathway will be constructed across the park, connecting the reserve to the Tilligerry Habitat and Mallabula Wharf.

At a later stage, the boat launch ramp will be rebuilt, giving Mallabula its local (high tide) ramp matching Tanilba Bay (Foster Park) and Lemon Tree Passage (Beach Road).



Figure 13 Caswell Reserve - Current

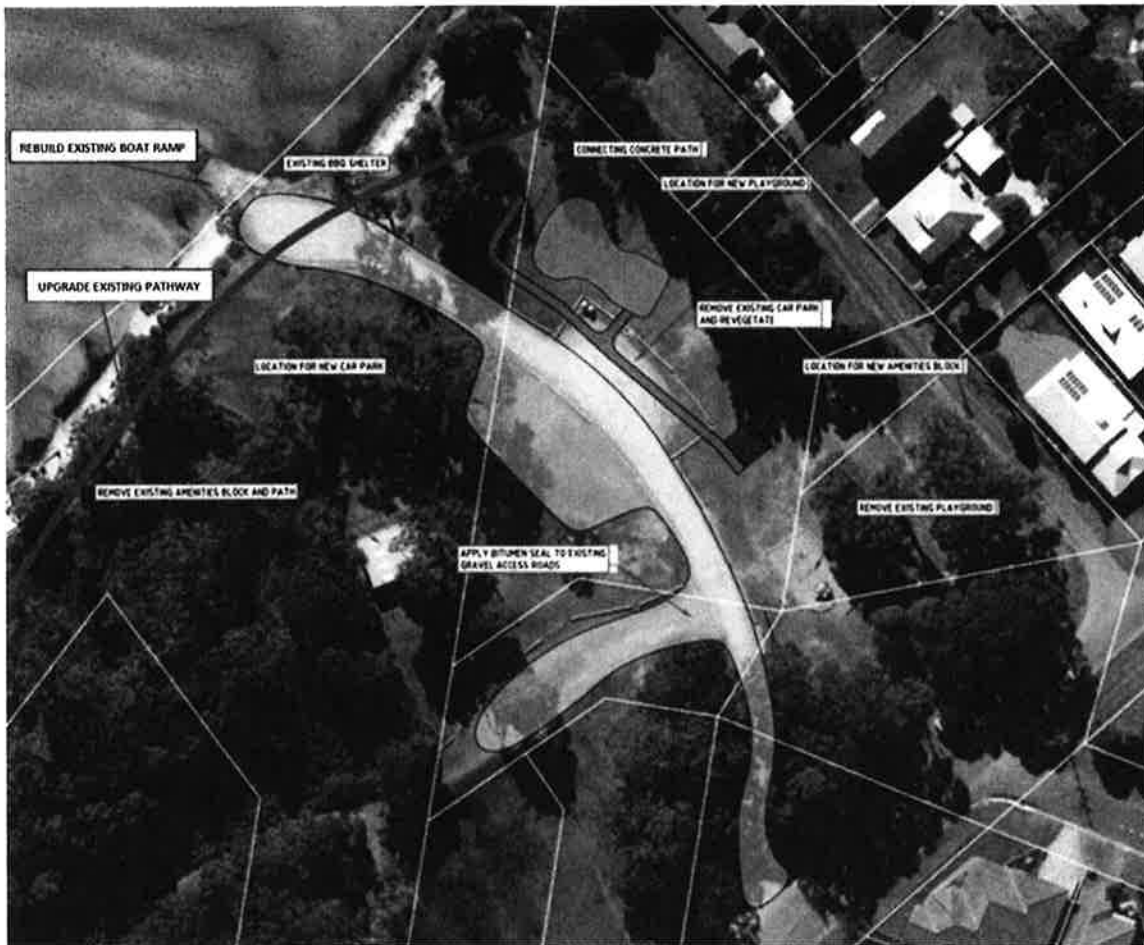


Figure 14. Caswell Reserve Masterplan - Port Stephens Council

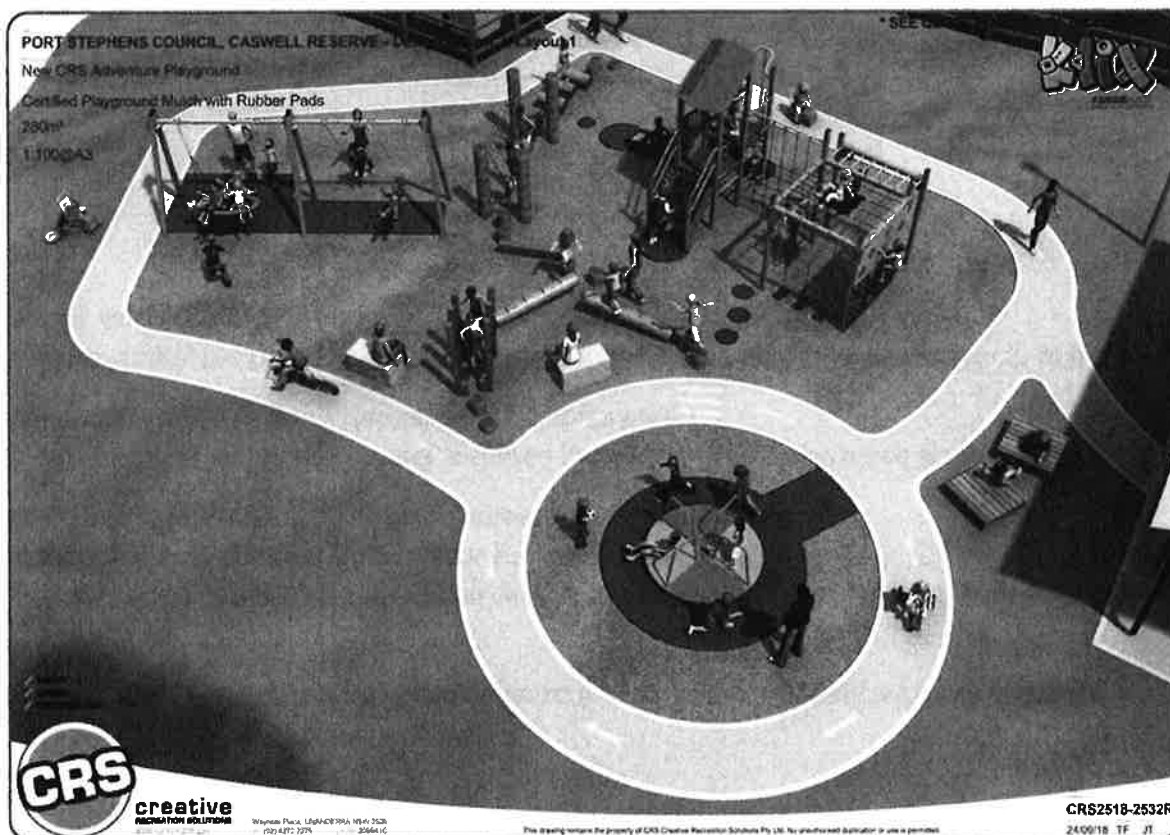


Figure 14a. Caswell Reserve Playground Design - Port Stephens Council

Lions Peace Park

Stage 1 of this project- replacement toilet and washroom facilities - has been completed.

Stage 2 involves relocation of the carpark, construction of a BBQ Shelter and turfing of the existing carpark to provide a picnic area.

Stage 3 is replacement of the boat ramp with a purpose-built kayak launch deck once the upgrade of the Foster Park facility has been completed.

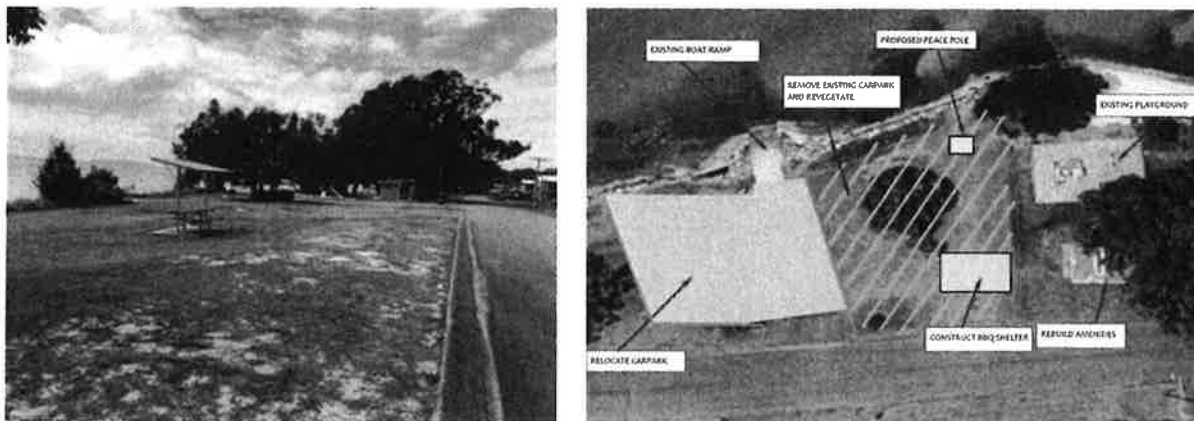


Figure 15. Lions Peace Park

The “Peace Pole”

It is proposed to erect a “Peace Pole” in this Peace Park to highlight the vision behind its name.

Similar poles have been placed around the world to promote peace. The one featured below is in the town of Bright, Victoria.



Figure 16. Bright Peace Pole Plaque



Figure 17. The Bright Peace Pole

Tanilba Boat Launch Ramp – Foster Park

Tar sealing and extension of the launch ramp to provide additional car and boat trailer parking will enable closure of the difficult ramp at Lions Peace Park and its replacement with a smaller platform for launch of kayak and canoes.

This ramp is the best location for a Small Dingy Launch Area for Tanilba Bay as relocation of the playground to Tanilba Park has created additional space and has removed beach activities and children from this area.

Masterplan



Figure 17. Tanilba Launch Facility

Carpark Sealing - Mallabula Wharf

The carpark and turning circle at Mallabula Wharf are severely eroded and has no formal parking layout. To prevent further degradation and improve safety, this facility should be tar sealed as part of the SRV program.



Figure 18. Mallabula Wharf Carpark

Carpark Sealing - Beach Road Reserve

Beach Road Reserve is located midway along the southern Lemon Tree Passage shared path. Tar sealing of the car park, provision of some covered tables and formalisation of the small dingy ramp is proposed.



Figure 19. Beach Road Reserve - Dingy Launch Ramp

Carpark Sealing – Marine Drive Lemon Tree Passage

Marine Drive Carpark is located midway along the Cook Parade Lemon Tree Passage. Tar sealing of the car park, provision of some covered tables is proposed.



Figure 20. Marine Drive Carpark

Toilet Facility - John Parade

A single toilet facility is required on John Parade section of the shared path. This section is quite isolated and a considerable distance to other facilities. A single (wheelchair friendly) unit would suffice.

Old School Site – Lemon Tree Passage

This site is currently classified as “Council Operational Land” and is zoned environmental “E2”.

Operational means that it can be sold or leased for commercial purposes. The E2 zoning restricts development on the site to a single structure and prevents vegetation removal.

It is proposed that if the buildings are removed, this site be permanently protected by reclassifying it as “Community Land” and adding it to the Helen Avenue bushland reserve.



Figure 21. Lemon Tree Passage Old School site

Roads and Pathways

Roadworks – Top Priorities

Tanilba Road

Tanilba Road is considered by many to be the worst road on the Tilligerry Peninsula. Being a connecting road, it carries considerable traffic and is in very poor condition. Rebuilding this road has been nominated as the number one priority. A shared pathway (or on-road cycleway) should also be considered.



Figure 22. Tanilba Road, Mallabula

Avenue of the Allies

Avenue of the Allies is the main entry to Tanilba Bay and is lined in the most part with Norfolk Island pines which provide a vista to the waterfront. It is in poor condition with pavement broken along the edges and has poor drainage. Avenue of the Allies is the number two priority road rebuilds on the Tilligerry Peninsula. A full rebuild with a shared pathway (or on-road cycleway) will link the gates with the waterfront path at Lions Peace Park.



Figure 23. Vista down Avenue of the Allies

Roadworks – Secondary Priorities

Tanilba Bay

Army Avenue

Navy Nook

Beatty Boulevard

Peace Parade

Edge is breaking away on waterfront reserve side. Concrete strip is required.



Figure 24. Peace Parade Edging

Mallabula

Bay Street

Lemon Tree Passage

Francis Avenue

Dean Parade

Shared waterfront path between Swan Street, Tanilba Bay and Tanilba Sailing Club.

This will link to the foreshore boardwalk and to the existing Tanilba to Mallabula cycle path via the Sailing Club access road.

LTP Boat ramp to Rudd Reserve

The existing shared waterfront pathway from the Launch Ramp is to be extended to Rudd Reserve. This section of waterfront parkland is underutilised and is often difficult to negotiate after periods of rain. The inclusion of exercise stations along this pathway (approximately 600m) will add to its utility and attract further visitors and focus to the CBD.

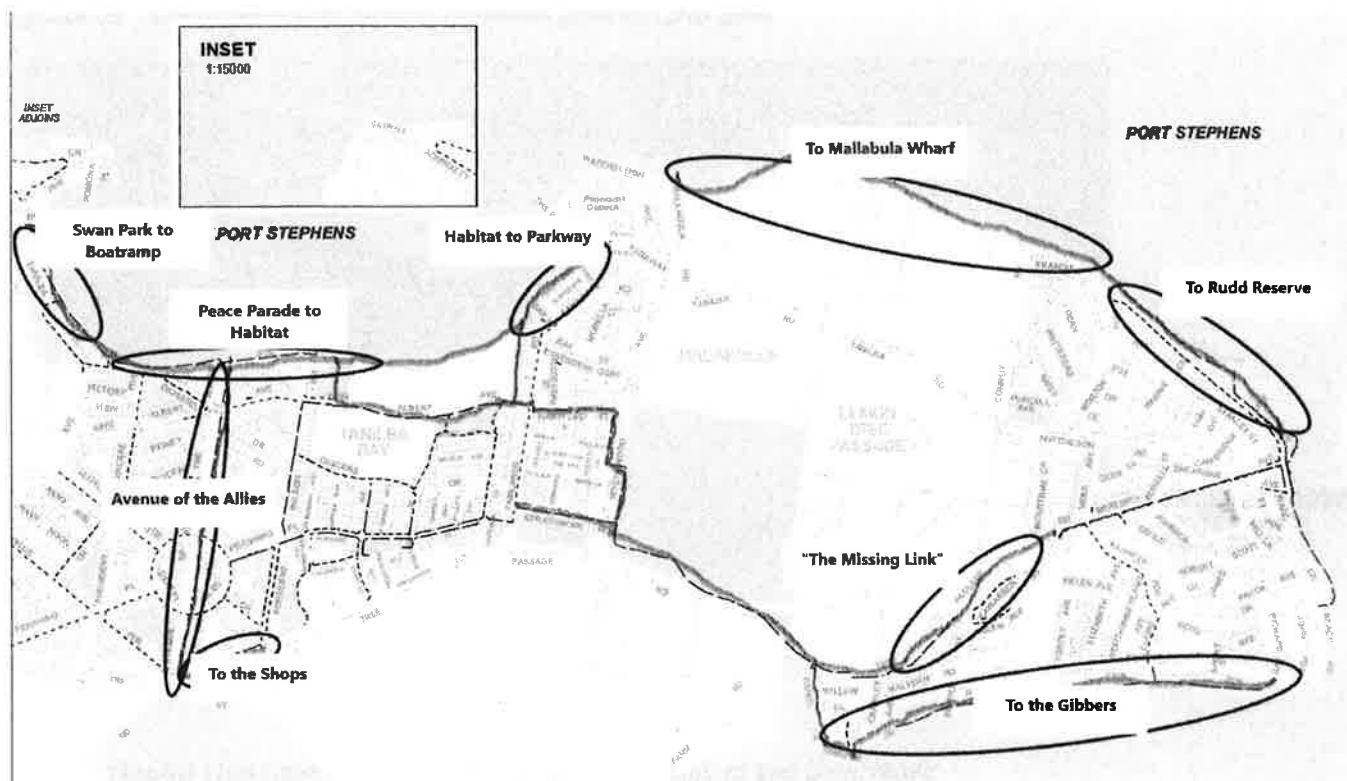


Figure 26. Tilligerry Forward Pathway Plan

Youth, Community and Sporting Facilities

These are located at the Mallabula Sports and Community Complex. Some of these are in dire need of refurbishment and there is a general lack of connection.

The Sporting Facilities consist of Rugby League grounds with clubhouse changerooms, two Tennis Courts and clubhouse, a 25m heated pool with children's splashpad, and a shared facility for Soccer, Little Athletics and Cricket.

Dedicated youth facilities include a skate/scooter park and BMX Track.

Community Facilities include a Community Hall with meeting rooms and a Men's Shed.

The Proposal is to

1. Upgrade the inadequate toilet and washroom facilities at Soccer/Cricket/Little Athletics.
2. Tar seal and mark the Tennis Club carpark (shared with Rugby League) and the add two new (possibly multipurpose incorporating Futsal).
3. Grade and realign the existing BMX track with additions to the existing Skatepark.
4. Refurbish the Community Hall and construct a dedicated self-contained youth annex. To improve functionality, the Hall will have (internal) connectivity to both the Swim Centre and the Youth Annex via two-way lockable double doors. Replacement of the sprung timber floor should also be considered.
5. Landscape and shape the entrance from Lemon Tree Passage Road to give the complex a sense of place.
6. Provide connectivity to shared pathway network.

Management and booking of the complex have always been difficult, so the possibility of the Pool contractor (currently Belgravia) taking on this role is being considered.



Figure 27. Soccer, Little Athletics and Cricket



Figure 28. Tennis Courts and Carpark



Figure 29. BMX Track and Skate Park



Figure 30. Tilligerry Heated Pool



Figure 31. Community Hall



Figure 32. Tilligerry Men's Shed

Foreshore Erosion

Sunset Park - Tanilba Bay

Halloran Structures located on the eastern shoreline of Sunset Park are in danger due to foreshore erosion.



Figure 33. Erosion at Sunset Park

Caswell Reserve - Mallabula

Caswell Reserve adjacent to the launch ramp.



Figure 34. Erosion at Caswell Reserve

John Parade and The Gibbers – Lemon Tree Passage

The banks of Tilligerry Creek adjacent to John Parade, beginning at the Gibbers and stretching to the point at the end are subject to severe erosion.



Figure 35. Erosion along John Parade and the Gibbers

Cook Parade – Lemon Tree Passage

The foreshore along Cook Parade adjacent to Marine Drive.



Figure 36. Erosion along Cook Parade

Land Use Planning

Land use is governed in several ways:

The Local Environment Plan (LEP)

This is the main planning instrument. These are enacted by Council and are ratified and bound by the NSW Department of Planning and provides planning and environmental control over the use and development of land. Modification by a council requires NSW Dept of Planning consent. These control such things as Zoning, permitted and prohibited uses and Building Heights.

Development Control Plans (DCP)

These are Council instruments and are generally not legislatively binding but contain further guidance for implementation of the LEP. The DCP includes requirements for such things as minimum setbacks, fence heights and design and requirements for individual localities. Port Stephens has an overall DCP, with separate plans exist for Koala Bay and the LTP waterfront CBD on the Tilligerry Peninsula.

State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)

There are NSW Government legislation and there are lots of these and they cover all sorts of things from Seniors Living, Granny Flats etc.

Covenants

These are not very binding and can be challenged in court. A bit of a hangover from the old days when a developer would impose restrictions and guidelines upon a new estate. For example to restrict building materials to brick and tile.

Vegetation and wildlife management plans

The Port Stephens Koala Management Plan is one of these.

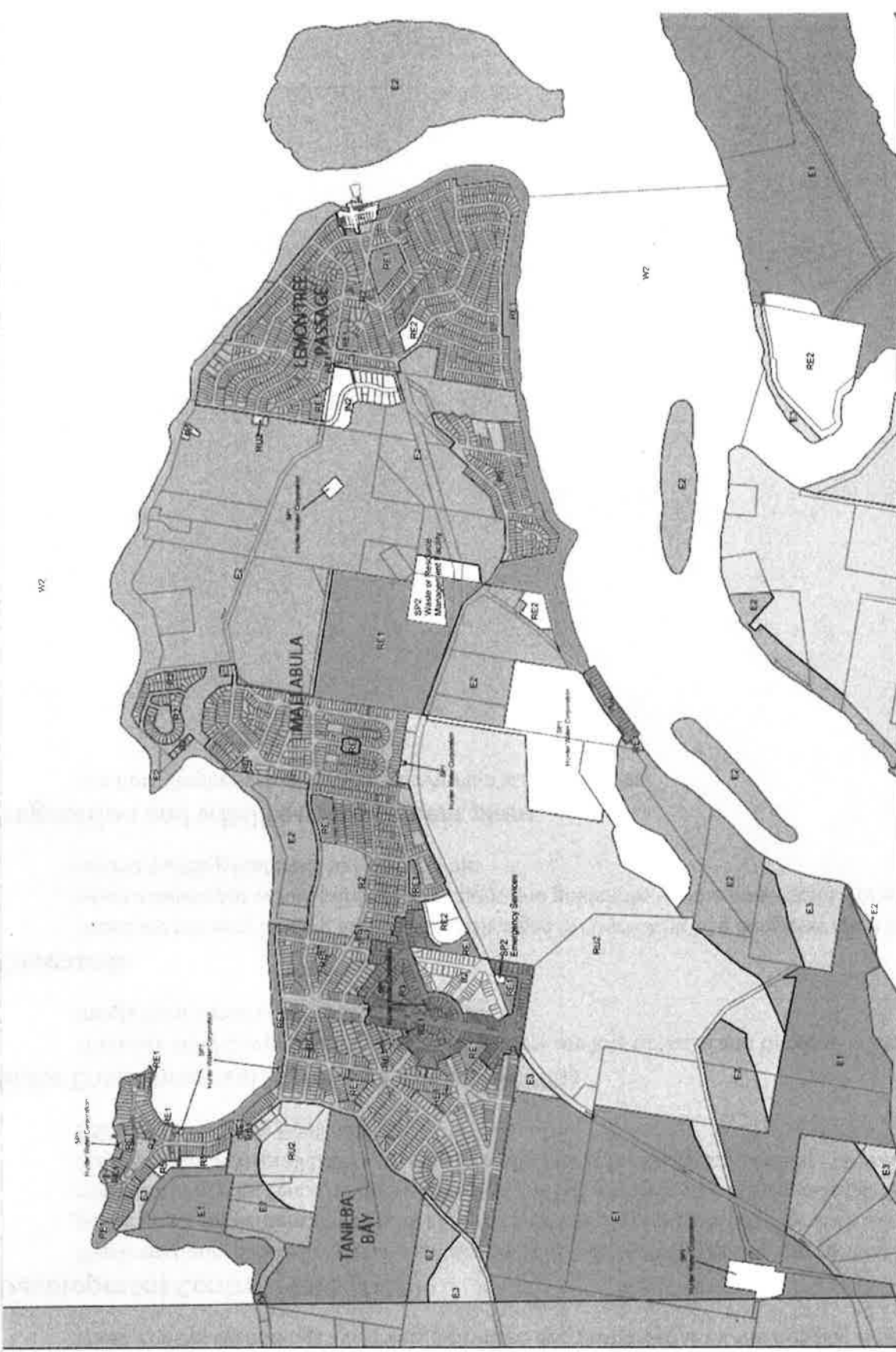
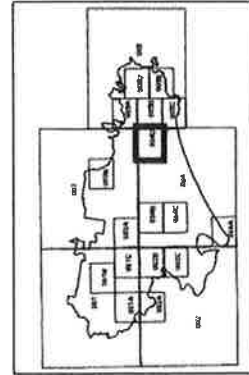
Land Zoning Map - Sheet LZN_004D

Zone

- B1** Neighbourhood Centre
- B2** Local Centre
- B3** Commercial Core
- B4** Mixed Use
- B5** Business Development
- B6** Business Park
- B7** National Parks and Nature Reserves
- B8** Environmental Conservation
- B9** Environmental Management
- E1** Environmental Living
- E2** General Industrial
- E3** Light Industrial
- E4** Working Waterfront
- E5** General Residential
- E6** Low Density Residential
- E7** Medium Density Residential
- E8** Large Lot Residential
- E9** Public Recreation
- E10** Private Recreation
- E11** Primary Production
- E12** Rural Landscape
- E13** Forestry
- E14** Village
- E15** Special Activities
- E16** Infrastructure
- E17** Natural Waterways
- E18** Recreational Waterways

Cadastral

- ☐ Cadastral Information (LPI)



Appendix A - Tilligerry SRV Submission

Capital Projects

The following projects proposed and prioritised:

1. Redevelop and landscape the intersection of Meredith Street and Cook Parade to provide a focus or "CBD Destination". A town square or piazza has been suggested.
2. Link the villages of Tanilba Bay, Lemon Tree Passage, Mallabula (and later Oyster Cove) using a network of shared pathways. This would include a coastal pathway incorporating exercise stations along the foreshore from Lemon Tree Passage to Tanilba House. The "missing link" at Lemon Tree Passage is the priority.
3. Improve the "streetscape" appeal of President Wilson Walk in the Tanilba Bay commercial area - from Lemon Tree Passage Road to its intersection with Pershing Place. A general softening of this thoroughfare is proposed including making the visual impact of the old Tilligerry Plaza less intrusive.
4. Upgrade the three "local dingy ramps" in each of the villages to ease congestion at the main facility at Lemon Tree Passage. Beach Road, Lemon Tree Passage, Foster Park Tanilba Bay and Caswell Reserve at Mallabula have been identified as the target sites.
5. Create a cultural focus for the community by creating a "Village Green" and "Heritage Cultural Village" at McCann Park, Lemon Tree Passage. Community arts and crafts facilities will be moved from the Old School site and the Library moved across the road. This will benefit local artisans and residents and provide an economic boost for the town.
6. Rebuild the critical link roads of Tanilba Road in Mallabula and Avenue of the Allies in Tanilba Bay.
7. Install a centrepiece in the Tanilba Gates roundabout to provide the peninsula with a "Welcome or Arrival Statement".
8. Update the existing community, youth and sporting facilities at the Mallabula Complex and link these to the three villages via the shared pathway network.

Events and Sponsorships

The following events were prioritised:

Lemon Jam
Australia Day
Tilligerry Festival
Art and Craft Show
Oysters and Semillon in the Park
Carols by Candlelight
Octoberfest
Tilligerry Motorama

Appendix B - Organizations and Clubs of the Tilligerry Peninsula

(21)
31/32

- . Tilligerry Chamber of Commerce
- . Port Stephens Tourism
- . Port Stephens Council (PSC)
- . Tilligerry RFS Brigade
- . Port Stephens Marine Rescue
- . Belgravia (Swimming Pool Contractor - PSC)
- . Worimi Land Council
- . Licenced Clubs
 - Club Lemon Tree
 - Tilligerry RSL Sports Club
- . Service Clubs and Organizations
 - Tilligerry Men's Shed
 - Senior Citizens
 - Legacy
 - CWA
 - View Club
 - Probus
 - RSL Sub Branch
 - Lions
 - Youth Group
- . Environmental and Parks
 - Tilligerry Habitat
 - Tilligerry Tidy Towns (PSC)
 - Lemon Tree Passage Parks & Reserves (PSC)
 - Mallabula Parks & Reserves (PSC)
 - Tanilba Bay Parks & Reserves and Hall (PSC)

. Sporting

Tilligerry Sports Council (PSC)
Lawn Bowls
Sailing
Cricket
Soccer
Junior Rugby League
Senior Rugby League
Tennis
Little Athletics
Swimming
Golf

. Craft and Cultural

Family History
Tilligerry Art Group (TAG)
Sewers and Quilters
Leadlight
Mallabula Hall (PSC)

. Churches

Anglican
Baptist
Catholic
Reformed
Uniting

The General Manager,
Port Stephens Council
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

email: haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/ipr_council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

19 December 2018

Dear Mr Wallis

Re: PSC2017-01717-001 Special Rate Variation of 7.5% over 7 years

I do not support the proposed SRV from the case put forward.

I note the following guiding principles stated in the draft of the "Long Term Financial Plan" on page 40:

"Councils should have regard to achieving intergenerational integrity, including ensuring the following:

- *Policy decisions are made after considering their financial effects on future generations;*
- *The current generation funds the cost of its services"*

The application for an SRV of 7.5% over 7 years I suggest fails these principles as follows:

Principle 1:

A significant proportion of the identified projects are devoted to improving sports facilities that includes borrowings of \$40M spread over four years. Within the "Strategic Asset Management Program" on page 25 it states: *"Historically, Councils policy regarding the use of loan funding has been that loan funding is only available where the proposed expenditure will result in a future revenue stream that will fund the loan repayments."* I have been unable to find a business case for these projects that supports this policy. Therefore, is Council, if it were to proceed, creating unfunded financial impacts on future generations. Historically, Port Stephens Council has engaged in similar investments, several holiday parks, that unfortunately did not develop revenue streams, and to the contrary, demanded significant additional funding that is ongoing to this day.

Principle 2:

Port Stephens Council would be advised to take note of the demographics of its jurisdiction. They vary greatly, and are in continuous change. Significant industrialisation has occurred near Raymond Terrace, whilst on the Tomaree Peninsula there are many projects providing increases to aged care and residential park living. With focus on the growth of the residential parks, if they achieve high occupancy, along with higher demand for services, there should be increased revenue. The SRV application perhaps understates the potential in this growth of revenue. Also, it may not place sufficient emphasis on the sources of these developing revenue streams which are likely to be from down-sizing retirees that fit either the self-funded or pensioner categories. To expect that these groups can absorb a 65% increase in rates over the seven years is misguided. The proposed

hardship assistance that is incorporated into the application mitigates to degree the Pensioner group for modest properties, but does not in any way assist those that are fortunate enough to have properties that are valued above the average. It must be remembered that CentreLink does not consider the principle residence when they conduct their reviews that are usually result below the cpi index and are of a trailing nature. It is a worse outcome for self-funded retirees that will not be given access to all of the projected hardship assistance. It therefore appears that the proposed increase of the asset base of Port Stephens Council will result in the current generation being unable to fund the proposed cost of its services.

Secondly, there does not appear to have been any information provided that benchmarks Port Stephens Council with its peers. Recently it was found that this council was "Fit for Purpose" by an independent State Government review. The Council felt so confident that it seriously considered amalgamation with Dungog Shire that was deeply unfunded. What has happened in such a short period? Perhaps by conducting benchmarking reviews some opportunities may be detected. An example of benchmarking I have been able to find is that Port Stephens Employee Benefits are 31.6% of Revenue, whilst Maitland has 21.9%. Is there opportunity to improve in this metric, and how many other metrics could benefit from productivity gains? Would productivity gains result in meeting the goal of *"the current generation funds the cost of its services"* without the need for the SRV?

This commentary represents a few of the reasons I do not support this application. I believe it is flawed and is contradictory in its presentation and structure.

I confirm that I have not made any reportable political donations in the past two years.

Yours faithfully,

A large, solid black rectangular redaction mark covering the signature area.

The General Manager
Port Stephens Shire Council
116 Adelaide Street
Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

19th December, 2018

Attention: **Wayne Wallis**

re: **Special Rate Variation (SRV)**
PSC 2018-02118 Special Rate Variation

Dear Wayne

This submission has been prepared to outline my objections to the Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposed by Port Stephens Council.

The first point I would like to make is that the SRV does not do enough to take into account the hardship that it will cause to pensioners who are already feeling the bite from high bills such as petrol, electricity & medical. This is totally unfair to the pensioners & is not equitable.

The second point that I am making is that road widening of Soldiers Point Road at Spencer Park is included in the SRV calculations & this item should be removed from the amended draft document. I lodged an objection to the inclusion of Soldiers Point Road widening at Spencer Park in my submission dated 29th August 2018 based on the Local government Act requirements & I'm **very disappointed that the road widening adjacent to Spencer Park has been retained in the revised SRV document** which leads me to believe that Council is seeking extra unnecessary funding in the SRV.

In particular this objection relates to the proposal to construct 90⁰ parking bays along the Soldiers Point Road frontage of Spencer Park at a **highly inflated cost of \$500,000.00**. **This construction will cost no more than \$200,000** which leads me to conclude that all the estimates contained in the SRV documents are highly inflated.

On 20th August 2018 I had a telephone discussion with [REDACTED] from Council who stated that the increased parking here was requested by local residents. This statement is **totally incorrect** as the local residents strongly opposed this proposal that was put forward by Council staff as a suggestion to help solve the parking problems associated with the failed Soldiers Point Marina extension proposal. The Soldiers Point Community Group (SPCG) was vehemently opposed to the construction of these parking bays as it requires the removal of several substantial & some minor trees along that road frontage thus severely affecting the amenity of the park.

It is certified that [REDACTED] has not made any reportable political donations in the past two years.

This submission has been prepared by Peter Maloney of:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary intent of this submission is to lodge a formal objection to the proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) advertised by Port Stephens Council & **more specifically the inclusion of proposed parking at Spencer Park in Soldiers Point Road, Soldiers Point.** This objection is based on the following:

- a. Existing parking facilities.
- b. Amenity of Spencer Park.
- c. Local Government Act
- d. Port Stephens Council's Urban Parks Generic Plan of Management

The objections proffered are based on the following documents:

- a. Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management
- b. Minutes of Port Stephens Council ordinary meeting dated 11th August 2015 & the attachments to those minutes
- c. NSW Local Government Act 1993
- d. Land & Property Information Director General's Direction
- e. RMS Traffic Generating Developments
- f. Department of Local Government – Practice Note No 1 Public Land Management
- g. AS2890.5 On-street parking
- h. Port Stephens Council's Urban Parks Generic Plan of Management for urban parks. dated April 2004

Inspections of the available documents associated with the SRV appear to ignore the fact that there is substantial parking already available to Spencer Park along its three existing road frontages that total 200 metres.

2. SPENCER PARK

Spencer Park is bounded by Ridgeway Avenue to the north, Soldiers Point Road to the east & Resthaven Avenue to the south – *vide photo 1*. It is known as Lot 205 in DP27084. The park is listed as **community land** in Council's asset records & is categorised as sports ground with the owner being Port Stephens Council.

Spencer Park contains the following facilities:

- 3 tennis courts with clubhouse facilities
- A playground equipment area
- Barbeque facilities
- A public toilet
- A charity bin

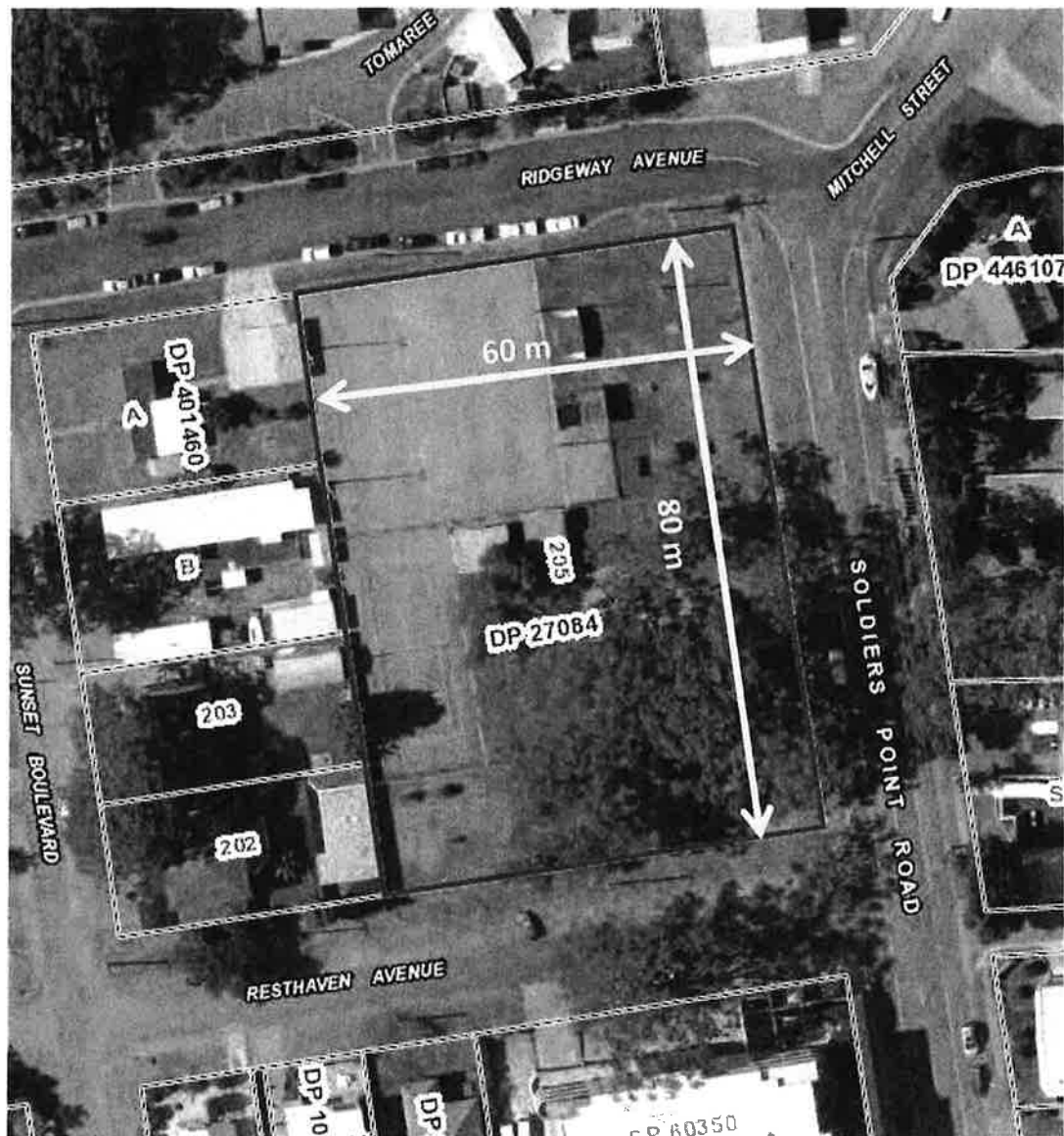


Photo 1 - Spencer Park

The park facilities are well used by the community. Koalas have also been observed to use some of the trees on the Soldiers Point Road edge of the park.

The existing parking facilities available to people using Spencer Park can be described as:

- **Ridgeway Avenue**

Road frontage – 60 metres, available existing parallel parking spaces 9.

- **Resthaven Avenue**

Road frontage – 60 metres, available existing 90° parking spaces 24.

- **Soldiers Point Road**

Road frontage – 80 metres, available existing parallel parking spaces 10 (*taking into account the existing Australia Post mail box*).

This then equates to a total of existing parking spaces adjacent to the reserve as 43 which is more than enough to satisfy the peak parking requirements.

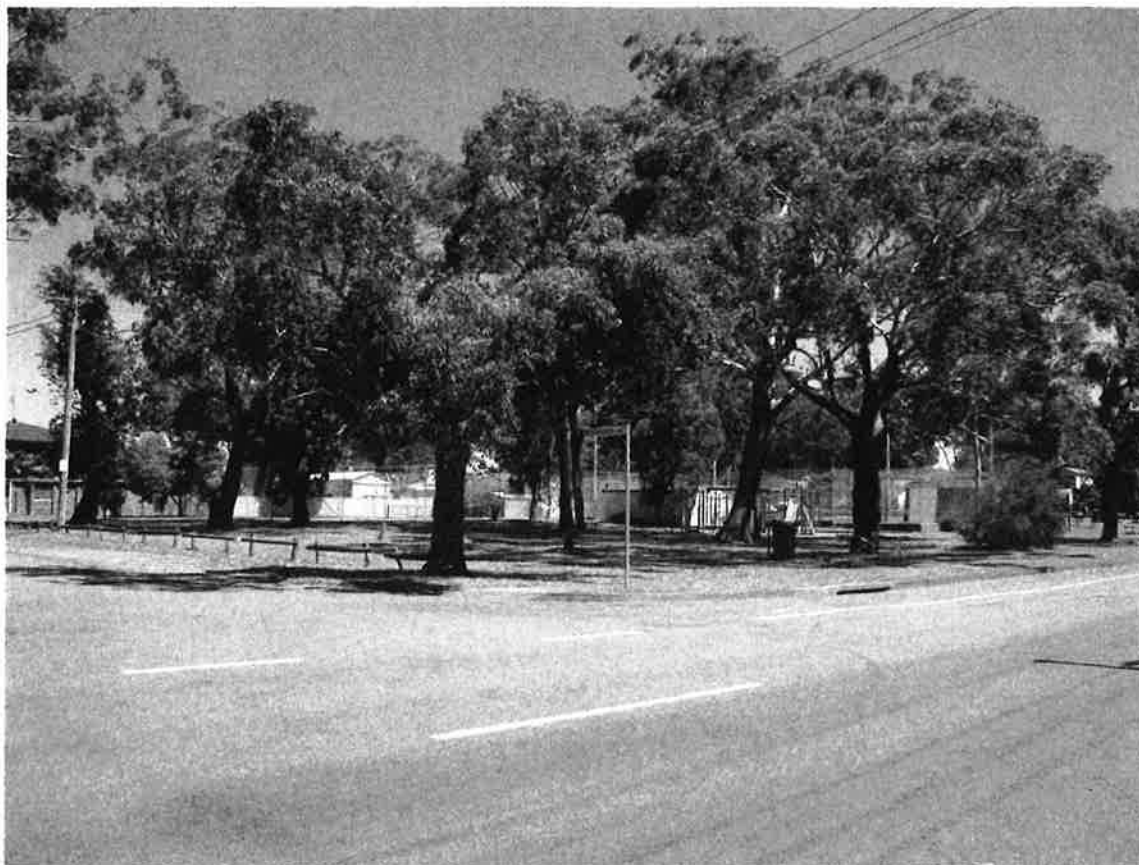


Photo 2 – Spencer Park

3. WIDENING OF SOLDIERS POINT ROAD

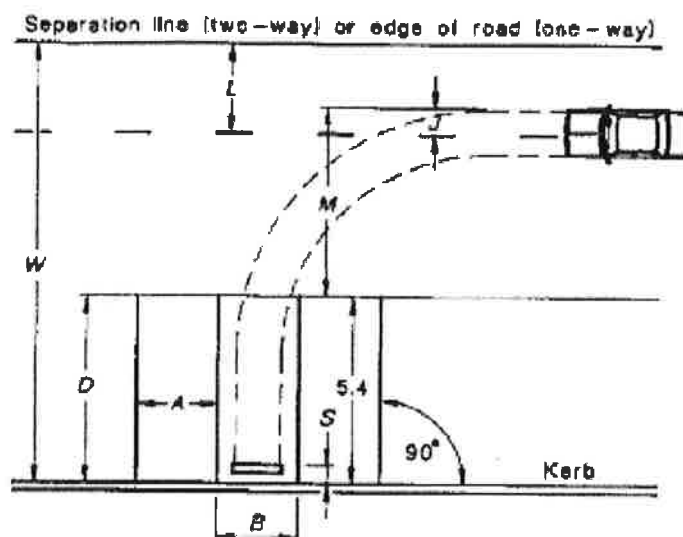
A proposal has been put forward to widen Soldiers Point Road along the Spencer Park frontage that provides an extra 18 parking spaces (*taking into account the existing Australia Post mail box*) set at 90° to the road – *vide photo 3*. **This proposal was previously put forward by Council officers solely as a means to overcome the shortage of parking spaces associated with the parking problems created by the Soldiers Point marina & the businesses contained therein.**

The SRV proposal to construct 90° parking bays along the Soldiers Point Road frontage of Spencer Park has been listed at a **highly inflated cost of \$500,000.00**. With a total road frontage of 80 metres & with a pavement construction width of 5.1 metres (*vide following paragraph*) the total road pavement area to be constructed is about 410 m². With ancillary works such as footpath reconstruction, alteration to existing drainage, temporary road barriers, traffic control & 150mm kerb & gutter **this construction will cost no more than \$200,000** which leads me to conclude that all the estimates contained in the SRV documents are highly inflated.



Figure 2.5 of AS2890.5 (*vide following figure*) show that the kerb line will have to move 5.4 metres to the west but if a 600 mm overhang is allowed for this dimension can be moved back to 4.8 metres, an examination of the photo 3 shows that the 4.8 metre dimension is the probable proposal. Allowing for the fact that the road pavement will have to extend a minimum of 300 mm behind the face of kerb the actual excavation for the road pavement will extend 5.1 metres west of the existing kerb line. As a consequence of this construction it will be necessary to remove 3 substantial trees & 2 minor trees from the eastern edge of the park, as previously said koalas have been observed in at least one of the substantial trees.

The removal of the existing established trees will severely compromise the amenity of Spencer Park.



**90°
PARKING**

| Dimensions | | Use category (see Table 2.2) | | | |
|--|-------|------------------------------|--------|------|----------|
| | | Low | Medium | High | Disabled |
| A—space width | | 2.4 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 3.2 |
| B—space width parallel to kerb | | Same as Dimension A | | | |
| D—lateral depth of spaces (Note 1) | D_1 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| | D_2 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| | D_3 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| M—manoeuvre space (Note 2) | | 6.2 | 5.8 | 5.4 | 5.4 |
| J—allowable encroachment into adjacent traffic lanes (Note 3) | | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| Minimum width required, kerb line to outer edge of a moving traffic lane = $D + M - J$ | | 9.1 | 8.7 | 8.3 | 8.3 |
| L—width of lane(s) for moving traffic: | | | | | |
| 0-800 vehicles/hour (Note 4) | | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| 800-1600 vehicles/hour (Note 4) | | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.5 |
| W—minimum overall width required, kerb line to separation line = $D + M - J + L$: | | | | | |
| 0-800 vehicles/hour (Note 4) | | 12.6 | 12.2 | 11.8 | 11.8 |
| 800-1600 vehicles/hour (Note 4) | | 16.1 | 15.7 | 15.3 | 15.3 |
| S—wheelstop distance: | | | | | |
| Nose-in parking | | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Rear-in parking | | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 |

NOTES

DIMENSIONS IN METRES

- Dimension D is selected as follows (see Note 2):
 - D_1 —where parking is to a wall or high kerb not allowing any overhang.
 - D_2 —where parking is to a low kerb which allows 600 mm overhang.
 - D_3 —where parking is controlled by wheelstops installed at right angles to the direction of parking.
- Formulae from which values of D_1 , D_2 and D_3 have been calculated are given in AS 2890.1.
- Dimension M gives the lateral space required when manoeuvring into or out of a parking space. Roadway width limitations are dealt with further in Clause 2.4.
- Dimension J is the extent to which a vehicle can be allowed to obstruct the adjacent moving traffic lane while manoeuvring into or out of a parking space. The value $J = 2.5$ m is appropriate to traffic speeds of 60 km/h or less past the site. At higher speeds it is recommended that J be reduced by 1.0 m for each 10 km/h by which the speed exceeds 60 km/h, with a minimum value of $J = 0$.
- The quoted traffic volumes are one-way maximum hourly volumes, total of all lanes, during the times parking is permitted.

FIGURE 2.5 LAYOUT AND MINIMUM ROADWAY WIDTH FOR 90 DEGREE ANGLE PARKING SPACES



Photo 4 – Substantial tree to be removed



Photo 5 – Substantial tree to be removed



*Photo 6 – Substantial tree to be removed;
koalas have been observed in this tree*



Photo 7 – Minor trees to be removed.

OBJECTION: The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road to facilitate additional parking will require the destruction of two minor trees & three substantial trees, at least one of which has been observed to contain koalas on occasions.

This act of tree removal will severely compromise the amenity of Spencer Park.

4. SOLDIERS POINT ABORIGINAL PLACE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT (SPAPPM)

Spencer Park was designated as Focal Area 8 (FA8) in the SPAPPM. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council dated 11th August 2015 Council agreed to endorse the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management unanimously. Page 8 of Attachment 1 of the Council Minutes (*also vide Attachment 2*) contained the following statement from the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council:

FA8

"The workshop committee participant's object to additional parking being created in FA8 regardless of the area already being earmarked for car parking spaces and currently sitting within the gazetted road corridor (better known as Soldiers Point Road)."

RECOMMENDATION FOR FA8:

1. We do not believe there to be a need for additional car parking spaces in this area and encourage PSC to adopt the same understanding."

The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road for additional parking is contrary to the SPAPPM

OBJECTION: The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road to facilitate additional parking generated is in conflict with the requirements of the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management & should be removed from the SRV.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

As the existing pathway width on Soldiers Point Road is 4.0 metres the new kerb line will encroach onto Spencer Park by 800 mm plus a further 150 mm for the kerb width the road boundary will have to be relocated a minimum of 950 mm into community land. If a concrete footpath is to be provide immediately adjacent to the parking bays it will have to be 2.0 metres wide for front-in parking or 2.3 metres wide for rear-in parking (*vide AS2890.5 cl 3.3*). This has the potential of moving the road boundary a minimum of 2.95 metres into Spencer Park. If the Council elects not to move the road boundary there could be a problem with Compulsory Third Party Insurance & Vehicle insurance as there is a potential for injury or damage to occur on a public reserve & not on a roadway; this may also lead to insurance problems for Council.

Section 47F of the Local government Act 1993 states the following:

"47F Dedication of community land as public road

(1) Community land may not be dedicated as a public road under Section 10 of the Road Act 1993 unless:

- a. the road is necessary to facilitate enjoyment of the area of community land on which the road is constructed or of any facility on that land, &*

- b. the council has considered means of access other than public road access to facilitate that enjoyment, &
- c. there is a plan of management applying only to the land concerned & provision of the public road is expressly authorised in the plan of management.

(2) Subsection (1) does not apply to:

- a. a dedication of land for the purpose of widening an existing public road, or
- b. a dedication of land for the purpose of other roadworks of a minor character, authorised by the plan of management applying to the land, in respect of existing roads, or
- c. a dedication of land for the purpose of a road that is the subject of an order under Division 1 of Part 5 of the Roads Act 1993".

These principals are also stated in "Department of Local Government – Practice Note No 1 Public Land Management" and "Land & Property Information Registrar General's Direction - Action Affecting Public Reserves".

With the park fronting three roads there is no to need improve the access to the park so Section 47F Subsection (1)(a)&(b) can't be applied.

Examination of the Council's document "Urban Parks Generic Plan of Management" dated April 2004 show that this document is a generic plan & covers the management of all urban parks in the Port Stephens Shire. As there is no specific plan of management relating to Spencer Park Section 47F Subsection (1)(c) prohibits the community land from being used as public road.

As Soldiers Point Road is 20.115 metres wide with 4.0 metre footpaths on both sides the carriageway width is over 12 metres wide. The road is a collector road that should be capable of carrying over 3000-6000 vehicles per day. It is highly unlikely that this northern end of Soldiers Point Road will attract that volume of traffic so the existing carriageway is more that capable of carrying the volume of traffic that utilises it hence road widening is not applicable. As there is no need to widen the road Section 47F Subsection (2)(a) can't be applied. Likewise Subsection (2)(b) can't be applied as there is no need to widen the road for traffic reasons & there is no site specific Plan of Management.

It is also obvious that there is no Ministerial Order applying to the Soldiers Point Road hence Section 47F Subsection (1)(c) does not apply.

As the existing parking along the three park frontages is more than adequate with the provision of forty-three existing parking bays the provision of extra 90⁰ parking bays along Soldiers Point Road is not warranted. As the sole purpose for the provision of these bays is to satisfy a short fall in Council funding this proposed construction is contrary to the Section 47F of the Act.

OBJECTION: The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road to facilitate additional parking is contrary to Section 47F of the Local Government ACT. The proposal to install 90⁰ parking bays along Soldiers Point Road should be removed from the SRV.

6. URBAN PARKS GENERIC PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

In Section 3.1.1 of Council's Generic Plan of Management the following statements are made:

- **Dot point 10** – *"Parking & vehicular access within the sites should be managed to reduce public liability risk & environmental impacts. The development of car parks on the subject land is permitted but only where ancillary to the recreation, environmental or cultural use of the land of buildings & must be constructed in an environmentally friendly manner"*.
- **Dot point 12** – *"Impacts on neighbouring properties should be considered prior to approval of any development"*.

Dot point 10 states parking is only permitted where ancillary to recreational, environmental or cultural use of the land. The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road & utilise a section for carparking is in direct conflict with this policy. It is not needed for any of those reasons & the destruction of significant trees is environmentally irresponsible.

The proposal is also in conflict with dot point 12 as no consideration has been given to the impact on neighbouring properties.

OBJECTION: The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road to facilitate additional parking generated is in conflict with the requirements of the Generic Plan of Management & should be removed from the SRV.

7. CONCLUSION

It is the conclusion of this submission that the inclusion of road widening of Soldiers Point Road to facilitate extra parking adjacent to Spencer Park should be removed from the SRV for the following reasons:

- The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road to facilitate additional parking generated **is in conflict with the requirements of the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management** & should be removed from the SRV.
- The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road by the installation of 90⁰ angle parking is in conflict with the Local Government Act & Council's Urban Parks Generic Plan of Management document. This proposal that has been put forward is **not in the public interest**.
- The construction of the 90⁰ angle parking bays in Soldier Point Road will require the **removals of three significant established trees; one of which is known to be used** from time to time by koalas.
- The local community has, in the past, strongly opposed the proposal to reconfigure the existing parking arrangements in this location.

- The proposal to provide 90° parking along the Soldiers Point Road frontage of Spencer Park should be removed from the SRV document.
- The estimated cost of \$500,000 for the construction the 90° angle parking bays in Soldier Point Road is grossly overestimated as this construction should cost less than \$200,000 hence this is not a genuine cost estimate & should be removed from the SRV document.
- The shortfall of parking at the marina must be resolved by the owners of the marina & not be funded by the rate payers.

To: Port Stephens Council
P.O. Box 42 Raymond Terrace
NSW, 2324

18th December, 2018

Re: Special Rate Variation Proposal

I am writing to object to the proposed SRV.

I do not believe imposing a cost of 65% increase over seven years can be justified by the projects that have been identified in the plan listed below;

Proposed SRV funds expenditure If successful, the proposed rate increase will provide additional funds (with the use of loans) to deliver major projects and increased services requested by the community; in particular: • town centre and neighbourhood revitalisation • new and improved infrastructure • enhanced services and maintenance. It will fund projects that will stimulate the local economy, drive business growth, attract visitors and enhance our region for residents. It will fund more cycleway and footpaths, allow for a boosted road resealing and rehabilitation program, improved amenities, enhanced services in the libraries and provide stronger support for local events. The rate increase would remain permanently in place to fund ongoing delivery of events and community services, continue capital road projects, service the remaining loan requirements and maintain existing and new infrastructure built as part of the SRV program. Over the 10 year period from 2019-2020 to 2028-2029, Council proposes to use the SRV funds to: 1. Fund major, one-off infrastructure projects with additional loan borrowings The estimated \$133.4m raised through the proposed SRV will be leveraged with loans of \$60 million over 20 years for new and enhanced major infrastructure projects as well as renewal of existing assets to be built over a 10 year period. These are:

Town centre and neighbourhood revitalisation \$40m

Road resealing and rehabilitation \$35.150m

Paths and cycleways \$9.7m

New and improved community amenities

\$8m Sports facilities upgrades \$6.8m

Depot relocation and rehabilitation

\$5m Foreshore improvements

\$3m Shoal Bay drainage

\$2m Street lighting upgrade

\$2m Soldiers Point carpark

\$0.500m \$112.150m More details are available in the LTFP. Delivery

Program and Operational Plans 2018-2021

None of the projects listed above are in my opinion essential. With almost 80% of residents stating they are happy with the council's services and I find it difficult to understand how town revitalisation is top of the list.

I also feel moving a depot at cost of \$5M to extend a sport field that is hardly used is another misplaced priority.

The other concern I have is for many people who have stated on social media, through submissions and in conversation the rate rise will place financial hardship on their already tight budgets.

On the graph for proposed rate increased I noted some business will be paying an extra \$2,000 a year , this is hardly a way of encouraging business growth.

Perhaps there is less urgency since this SRV was first proposed, recently the council has received quite a few NSW state funding grants, why ask for more from the residents.

I accept the usual CPI rate rise but not this proposed SRV.



18/440331
1/4 (25)

The General Manager,
Stephens Council
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

email: haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/ipr_council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

19 December 2018

Dear Mr Wallis

Re: PSC2017-01717-001 Special Rate Variation of 7.5% over 7 years

The [REDACTED] object to Council's proposal for a Special Rate Variation Option (SRV) of 7.5% per annum for the next 7 years on the basis that Council has not sufficiently considered financial hardship, previous surveys nor ecologically sustainable development as key issues and this seems to be reflected in the projects Council has chosen to fund.

We have invited comments from our [REDACTED] and friends on the above Council decision to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART)

All of the following comments/quotations we have so far received are **not in favour** of the 7.5% increase for the following reasons.

These are the comments/quotations we have received from [REDACTED] members and friends.

1. We disagree with the 7.5% rate increase as we shall not be able to afford the 65% increase over the next 7 years and possibly beyond?
2. It seems Council is not listening to the majority of ratepayers so what is the point of putting in a submission?
3. It is hard to believe that Council would not consider foreshore restoration as a priority
4. Sunset Blvd. has been neglected for years and years. It is a disgrace and something needs to be done before there is a serious accident.
5. Some projects seemed arbitrary compared with long standing priorities.
6. What about the so called 'Hardship Clause'? We find it totally confusing, with no foreseeable advantage apart from a small discount on waste charges.
7. Even if IPART approve the increase, Council has stated that some of these long term priorities, like foreshore restoration, may not be attended to for 3 years?
8. It seems as though Council has pulled these figures out of a hat. How have Council arrived at these estimates?
9. Private contractors could do many of these projects for less costs and less time
10. If this rate increase comes into force, we retirees will have to sell our family home
11. I think Council should better manage their finances and be responsible for their mismanagement, for example Thou Walla Sunset Retreat, Treetops and Lagoons estate.

12. Boomerang Park croquet court is a glaring example of Port Stephens Council's mismanagement of funds.
13. The hardship policy that is currently on public exhibition offers little or no relief for self funded retirees.
14. The Hardship clause is a joke. It will take 7 years before we can claim \$480 off our rates and by that time we will be long gone and so will our savings.
15. The Hardship clause will be negated by 65% increase in rates within the first two or three years.
16. What about ratepayer "rights" - in particular Council's "responsibility" to be open, transparent, and accountable to ratepayers.
17. Council has received substantial grants for many projects which would normally be financed by the rates they have already received. What has happened to these grants?
18. The maximum pensioner rebate for rates has not changed in 25 years.
19. The proposed reduction in charges for waste collection is not considered adequate compensation.
20. Some Council's provide a Green Bin for green waste. At the moment, Council charges ratepayers for an additional red bin for such waste or charges at the recycling centre during week days. This is not fair!
21. Council seem to be highly inflating their estimates and we would like to see this as part of the [REDACTED] submission.
22. Council claimed to be 'Fit for the Future' and that they had a surplus last year. Why then do they need all this extra money?
23. In effect, the Hardship policy will not make a dent on the 65% rate increase over 7 years.
24. What's to say that Council not revert to the normal CPI increase after 7 years and that would be absolutely unmanageable and people would be forced to move away?
25. It is hard to believe that Council would not consider foreshore restoration as a priority.
26. We receive the senior's pension. How are we to afford to live?
27. Having observed how inefficient Council construction staff are at their work around Soldiers Point recently and how disorganised they are they may need to double their estimates to cover their costs.
28. Repairs are urgently needed to the Port Stephens Yacht Club building which has had a veranda held up with acroprops for over twelve months and which has a restriction on the number of people who can be on the veranda. It is a Council owned building leased from Council for the past 15 years.
29. As retired pensioners, we hereby oppose this SRV of 7.5% and state that Port Stephens Council is one of very few in NSW 'Fit for the Future' and should remain with CPI increases only.
30. Not only should [REDACTED] put in an objection. We should encourage Members to put one in as well.
31. Definitely agree to the [REDACTED] putting in an objection to the proposed 7.5% SRV.
32. Please include the following 10 objectors to the SRV (*names supplied if required*)
33. Even Council investments, for instance, Thou Wall Sunset Retreat, is under threat from land collapse. When are they going to do something about it?

- 34. Council receives generous grants and subsidies from investments. These should be fully disclosed.
- 35. Foreshore Drive has been neglected for years and something should be done before there is a serious accident.
- 36. Council should consider public risk - who will be liable should a tree or the abandoned concrete steps collapse on this Council owned land and injure a member of the public?
- 37. Thanks [REDACTED] We need someone to speak for us.

Notwithstanding the affect the 65% increase in rates may have on ratepayers we bring to Council's attention the proposed '**one off costs**' and '**recurring costs**.'

One off and recurring costs

Out of the 40 estimated future costs, Council has listed just 6 as recurring costs per annum and a massive 24 one off costs which presumably should be finished within the first few years or so. Where is the justification in a permanent SRV of 7.5% when 24 of the proposed projects will have been completed within the time frames Council has outlined?

There is no clear consensus on many projects listed by Council and no guarantee that any of these projects will be placed on Council's capital works programme within the time frame mentioned. And if they are not, we do not see anywhere in the documents that states that the time frame and expense has to be strictly adhered too. What is the penalty if these projects are not completed at all?

In General

Council has declared that it is "Fit for the Future" How then is it fair and reasonable to request a rate variation of 7.5% when the present rate pegging is 2.7%.

We feel that a lot of people, especially pensioners, will be disadvantaged by such a leap in the rate variation and question why Council has not put forward consideration of a more moderate rate variation of perhaps 3-4%.

It is also salient to look at the cumulative costs to ratepayers in this area. Port Stephens, as a favoured retirement locale, has many on limited fixed incomes but whilst the economy has been showing good growth, incomes have been relatively stagnant.

We agree that Council has growing demands upon resources but point out that with the increase in developer contributions and population growth, so too does the amount received in rates grow accordingly. We note that Council has successfully applied for various grants and subsidies and question whether many of the proposals reliant on a 7.5% rate variation, namely sporting facilities estimated to cost \$6.8 million, are absolutely essential.

Major issues ratepayers are concerned about is that PSC is seemingly focused on development rather than on consideration of ecologically sustainable development. Council has stated that specific feedback received from the community prioritises key issues, and

"Ecologically sustainable development should be formally recognised as a key commitment."

How does Council propose to achieve this when a mere \$3m has been allocated under foreshore improvements and coastal protection? This to be divided between Conroy Park, Corlette; Little Beach Nelson Bay; Soldier's Point Foreshore revetment and pathway west of Thou Walla Retreat; Gibber Point Reserve, Lemon Tree Passage and Tilligerry Habit and Caswell Reserve; Mallabula and Waterfront Road, Swan Bay.

Even then, the proposal for Soldiers Point Foreshore revetment is conditional on IPART ratifying the 7.5% increase over the next 7 years. Moreover, Council has indicated that it may not commence works within the next three years.

Unregulated foreshore development on these fragile ecosystems and lack of foresight has led to the degradation of our foreshores; some now considered being in a critical condition.

Examples of this include Council's own property, Thou Walla Sunset Retreat, at Soldiers Point, listed as 9 Mitchell Street. Declared an Aboriginal Place and forming part of the Soldiers Point Plan of Management in 2016, Council's stated objectives for Focus Area 1 - North Eastern Foreshore, was to manage and protect the site's Aboriginal Heritage Significance and protect and enhance the foreshore environment.

The Womimi Local Aboriginal Council (SP POM) in their submission requested that PSC consider the installation of a cement pathway (2m wide) along the foreshore area connecting both the Soldiers Point Marina and the southern end carpark.

"In the event that any inspections reveal this not to be possible (ie: wash out and stabilising the pathway, it is thought that a floating boardwalk (similar to that installed at the Tilligerry Habitat) may be more suitable".

Are we to understand that unless Council receives approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a 7.5% SRV, ratepayers cannot expect any action to be taken for years by a Council seemingly reluctant to address the longstanding urgent restoration of our foreshores?

Until some of these questions are answered, the [REDACTED] feel that Council should attend to the outstanding maintenance projects from revenue received from generous grants, current rates and subsidies and from Council investments within and those investments outside Port Stephens.

Yours sincerely,

President: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 18 December 2018 2:32 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: The Cove village rates.

18/12/18

Attention [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED] from the 30th July 2018, many members of the Cove community, Fullerton Cove, including myself sent an Email as to why as a gated community, we are paying full rates imposed by Port Stephens council when the only input/action by the council is the weekly garbage collection.

You did personally phone me and advised that you would get back to me in regards to the councils response where our submissions were to be tabled at the council meeting in October.

I did send an Email to you on the 29th October in regards to this matter and was advised by [REDACTED] that you were on leave until the 19th Nov.

Based on this, can you please advise on any outcome to our requests or indeed have they been tabled and of any decision that may have been made.

As I stated previously, we all think it very unfair that we are expected to pay the full rate of \$1,390.43 considering the limited council input.

Regards,
[REDACTED]



Virus-free. www.avast.com

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 17 December 2018 10:25 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Integrated Planning and Reporting documents revised to include the Special Rate Variation PSC2017-01717-001

I am writing to you to confirm our opposition to the proposed SRV planned by your Council.

We live in the Seaside Estate in Fern Bay and apart from paying Council Rates, we also pay Strata Fees of \$464 p.a. Currently the only service that Council offers is collection of our red and yellow garbage bins. We receive a pensioner discount on our Council rates which results in a yearly charge of \$1,679.79 p.a.

There are no nearby infrastructure/facilities provided by Council. Should we wish to attend a library, swimming pool, sports field etc. These come under a different Council in Stockton. We do have a recently constructed Community Hall in Vardon Road which was fully paid for by S94 Funds collected from Seaside Estate.

PSC has no land around Fern Bay Fullerton Cove apart from a small park in Vardon Road which will receive an upgrade with a full size basket ball court to be constructed.

Currently there is negligible plans for any infrastructure spend in the Fern Bay/Fullerton Cove area apart from some footpath upgrades which does not justify a rate increase over the next 7 years in excess of around 77%.

Just some of the infrastructure we need are a proper complete cycle track from Fullerton Cove/ Seaside entry through to Stockton Bridge/Stockton Hospital, decent weatherproof covered bus shelters within Seaside Estate and also along Nelson Bay Road covering stops both sides at old Fern Bay near Vardon Road and Palm Lakes and Fullerton Cove. Replace dead street trees in Seaside Estate, replace rusty street sign posts around Seaside Estate. Introduce green waste bins as the red bins become full too soon having to include not only household waste but garden waste as well including lawn clippings leaving excess waste not being able to be included for that pickup.

Some road repair work needs to be done to remove the bumps at the entry and exit on Seaside Blvd to Nelson Bay Road. There is also a bad bump across Nelson Bay Road just before the roundabout to Seaside heading north.

The Council should also look at opportunities to buy land in the area for future infrastructure projects such as sporting grounds, skate parks and development land for a supermarket in Fern Bay/Fullerton Cove area.

We should not have to travel to other Council areas to use their facilities considering that we are paying rates to have those facilities available in our vicinity.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

[REDACTED]

Port Stephens Council,
Manager

[REDACTED]

N.S.W. 2324

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to Council on behalf of [REDACTED] the community meeting on the 10-12-18.

Thanks for having the community meeting. Great information and discussion happened. More regular meetings like this would be really appreciated to keep our community informed.

Our concern is the same as others - apparent inequality of projects and funds across Tilligerry Peninsula if the Special rates rise occurs next year.

We are asking that Tanilba Bay be included on the list for projects with IPART.

Our suggested list of projects is as follows.

1. **Linking of Shared pathways.** - there are several incomplete paths which stop and start further down the road - between the 2 shopping areas, to the school from the Kooindah Centre, no path down Avenue of the Allies (often see mobility scooters on the road) - Completion of the path between Foster Park and Tanilba Park possibly going to Swan Park.
2. **Cycle path Lemon Tree Passage** - The cycle path crossing at Lemon Tree Passage near Daniel street is very unsafe. The crossing (not signposted or marked on the road) is between bends. Vision very bad for cyclist and drivers. The surface is gravel next to the road not tarred. We are suggesting the path be extended on the left side of the road meeting the wider section further near Blanch Avenue with no crossing.
3. **Tilligerry Plan** - comprehensive planning for the future. This would go a long way to ensure environmental protection for Koalas and allow reasonable urban development.
4. **Erosion issues** - Foster and Sunset Park have glaring erosion issues which need attention.
5. **Haig Hexagon intersection** - water end of Ave of the Allies is a dangerous blind intersection - poor vision when driving through the Water gates - four roads coming in at the same spot.
6. Needs assessment and improvements made - query roundabout.
7. **Street tree planting** - Street trees not only enhance our town but add to the wildlife pathways. This concept has seemed to be lost at Council over the last few years.
8. **Drainage** - An issue in our community particularly around R.A.F. Park and Success Street area.
9. **Dog off lead fenced area in Caswell Reserve** - protective foreshore and koala habitat.

Thank you for your interest.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Email- [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

CC: Cr. S. Tucker; Cr. S. Smith, Cr. C. Doohan, Mayor R. Palmer

24 th November 2018

Dear Mayor Palmer

In reference to your letter dated 22nd October 2018, I would like to draw your attention to the section regarding the revitalising of infrastructure, including cycleway paths.

At Shoal Bay the shared cycleway from the Jetty to the Point was completed some years ago but the path along the waterfront is inadequate for pedestrians or cyclists, and at the end of the pathway there is a dirt path that ends at a dead end.

If the public wish to go further to ANZAC Park they have to walk along the edge of the road that is only wide enough for one person, this creates a dangerous situation especially at holiday times when there are lots of tourists.

These problems could be solved by building a Boardwalk adjacent to the road and replacing the current small pathway with adequate cycle and pedestrian access.

Regards


(Concerned Ratepayer)

A 'Petition' is under way.

181407748 (29)

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|---|
| PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL Information Services |
| 11 DEC 2018 |
| File No. |
| Action by |
| Parcel |



srj@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

❖ **Foreshore improvements and capital works (\$3m)** In Table B: “Risk to Asset and Risk Controls” in the Environmental section PSC has recognised “*There is a risk that sea level*

rise and extreme weather events may affect Council's objective to manage assets leading to damage to assets, repair costs and reputational loss". There is no projected financial undertaking to cover the risk on Shoal Bay foreshore against a collapse of the access road to Tomaree Headland that the pedestrian pathway has already been undermined through erosion.

- ❖ **Town centre and neighbourhood revitalisation (\$40m).** Despite proposed spending on 9 neighbourhood centres, Shoal Bay being the second busiest tourist attractions in Port Stephens with aging infrastructure has not received any projected funding to revitalise the town centre or foreshore parkland.

- ❖ **Paths and cycleways – (\$9.7m) Pathways desired Level of Attainment –PSC** has recognised *"all of the missing links documented in the PSC Pathway Plan Maps to be constructed in a prioritised order"*

The current proposed SRV amenities funding for the Shoal Bay Foreshore – missing link from Shoal Bay towards Nelson Bay past Anzac Park \$2,000,000 2020-2021 has been promised for a number of years and has now been further delayed putting pedestrian safety at risk.

Tomaree Road and Paths upgrade Stage 1 (fully funded) was due for completion in 2017-2018 however actual construction has not commenced. In the Strategic Asset Management Plan there is no mention of funding for equally important safety reasons Stage 2.

- ❖ **Works Plan Projects list – Transport Facilities – Fingal Bay Link Road (\$3m).**

Management of Roads and Maritime Services have indicated that the Fingal Bay Link Road is a long way down on their list of priorities and the finance for a project such as this is unlikely to be received in the foreseeable future. The \$3m would be better spent on designing and undertaking the more financially feasible route from Austral Street to Sylvia Street. This would alleviate the problem if for any reason Shoal Bay Road access was cut and with the road upgrade increase the accessibility to Tomaree Hospital.

- ❖ **Attachment 4: Capital Works Program 2019-2029 - Public Amenities Assets.** PSC is aware that Shoal Bay attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists every year, most visitors to both Shoal Bay and Halifax Holiday Parks come to the area to use the beach and local scenic environment. These visitors lack modern conveniences, PSC already had allocated funding for these to be replaced prior to the application of the SRV and it is inappropriate to restrict their replacement to SRV Funding.

The current proposed SRV funding is inadequate for the number of tourists that visit the area and the facilities required for paddleboard, dragon boat etc competitors to shower and change.

The current proposed SRV amenities funding is:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| Shoal Bay West Foreshore Public | Replacement | \$180,000 | 2019-2020 |
| Shoal Bay East Foreshore Public | Replacement | \$140,000 | 2020-2021 |

Whereas funding outside the SRV has been allocated to:

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Shoal Bay Holiday Park: | New Amenities Block | \$2,000,000 | 2019-2020 |
| Halifax Holiday Park: | New Amenities Block | \$2,000,000 | 2019-2020 |

PSC will state that the holiday park funds are Crown Reserves and funds generated should remain in Crown Reserves. Shoal Bay Amenity Blocks are on Crown Land and also provide facilities for holiday park residents and should therefore allow Crown Reserve funds to build suitable facilities.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted Signature]

[Redacted Name]

cc: Mayor and East Ward Councillors

[Redacted Name] has made no reportable political donations or gifts.



The General Manager
Port Stephens Council
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

19 December 2018

Dear Mr Wallis

Re: PSC2017-01717-001 - Special Rate Variation of 7.5% over 7 years

As a resident of Soldiers Point, I wish to note my object to Council's proposal for a Special Rate Variation Option (SRV) of 7.5% per annum for the next 7 years on the basis that Council has not sufficiently considered financial hardship for many retired residents in the Shire. I also cannot agree with most of the projects Council has chosen to fund. Also there does not seem to be a strong management plan as to where the money would be spent.

Notwithstanding the affect the 65% increase in rates may have on ratepayers I bring to Council's attention the proposed '**one off costs**' and '**recurring costs**.'

One off and recurring costs

Out of the 40 estimated future costs, Council has listed just 6 as recurring costs per annum and a massive 24 one off costs which presumably should be finished within the first few years or so. Where is the justification in a permanent SRV of 7.5% when 24 of the proposed projects will have been completed within the time frames Council has outlined?

There is no clear consensus on many projects listed by Council and no guarantee that any of these projects will be placed on Council's capital works programme within the time frame mentioned. And if they are not, we do not see anywhere in the documents that states that the time frame and expense has to be strictly adhered too. What is the penalty if these projects are not completed at all?

In General

Council has declared that it is "Fit for the Future" How then is it fair and reasonable to request a rate variation of 7.5% when the present rate pegging is 2.7%.

I feel that a lot of people, especially pensioners, will be disadvantaged by such a leap in the rate variation and question why Council has not put forward consideration of a more moderate rate variation of perhaps 3-4%. Maybe PSC have put forward the higher rate hoping to get 3-4% handed to them.

I understand and agree that Council has growing demands upon resources but point out that with the increase in developer contributions and population growth, so too does the amount received in rates grow accordingly. I note that Council has successfully applied for various grants and subsidies and question whether many of the proposals reliant on a 7.5% rate variation, namely sporting facilities estimated to cost \$6.8 million, are absolutely essential. Sports facilities we have seem quite adequate for both young and elderly.

A major issue as a ratepayer which concerns me is that PSC is seemingly focused on development rather than on consideration of ecologically sustainable development. Council has stated that specific feedback received from the community prioritises key issues, and ***"Ecologically sustainable development should be formally recognised as a key commitment."***

How does Council propose to achieve this when a mere \$3m has been allocated under foreshore improvements and coastal protection? This figure is to be divided between many beaches and totally inadequate. Tourists to Port Stephens do not visit for our sports facilities; they visit for the beaches and the bush. Port Stephens is a very unique place and our beaches should be fully maintained to the highest standard, not left to fully erode away.

Unregulated foreshore development on these fragile ecosystems and lack of foresight has led to the degradation of our foreshores; some now considered being in a critical condition.

Examples of this include Council's own property, Thou Walla Sunset Retreat, at Soldiers Point, listed as 9 Mitchell Street. Declared an Aboriginal Place and forming part of the Soldiers Point Plan of Management in 2016, Council's stated objectives for Focus Area 1 - North Eastern Foreshore, was to manage and protect the site's Aboriginal Heritage Significance and protect and enhance the foreshore environment. This facility is looking appalling with trees about to fall into the water. Putting red tape on the stairs from the Retreat to the non-existent beach is not an option or a solution. Residents and visitors expect more.

I feel that Council should attend to the outstanding maintenance projects from revenue received from generous grants, current rates and subsidies and from Council investments within and those investments outside Port Stephens.

I am also extremely annoyed that PSC while wanting a rate increase from residents, allows businesses throughout the Shire to use and abuse Council land/reserves as their own parking lots. A good example of this in my area is SP Marina and Bannisters Hotel. DAs should not be approved if businesses have a lack of parking for their requirements. They do not and should not have a right to use PSC land.

Yours sincerely,





Submission – Special Rate Variation – Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents

On behalf of [REDACTED], I write to make a submission on the Special Rate Variation 'Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents'.

[REDACTED] is a non-profit, incorporated body supported by Port Stephens Council (PSC), owned by members and autonomously managed by a board of nine industry representatives.

[REDACTED] conduct activities on behalf of our members; for the betterment of the region as a destination; to stimulate the local visitor economy and provide lifestyle benefits to the community. We also advocate for our members in areas of policy and regulation, where those resultant decisions have the outcome of advancing the visitor economy and the betterment of our members and the community we reside within.

[REDACTED] supports Port Stephens Council's application for a Special Rate Variation to implement major projects outlined in the Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting documents which will significantly enhance the destination and provide infrastructure that will contribute to attracting increased visitation and visitor expenditure.

Port Stephens is one of NSW leading regional tourism destinations attracting more than 1.5 million visitors, who stay 2.3 million nights and spend \$539 million (almost \$1.5 million a day) in the local government area in year ending June 2018*. [REDACTED] recently released a three-year strategic plan (2018-2021) which identified that the potential of the Port Stephens' visitor economy was based on securing investment in game-changing projects which featured many covered under the Draft Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents including:

- Town centre and neighbourhood revitalisation
- Increased investment in events
- Birubi Point Tourism Interchange (Information Centre)
- Implementation of the Tomaree Sports Complex masterplan to increase the acquisition of sporting events

Ongoing Investment in public infrastructure, facilities and services including paths and cycleways, BBQ facilities and public amenities are also required to meet visitor demand and to service the breadth of visitor needs.

**Source: Tourism Research Australia, National and International Visitor Surveys year ending June 2018.*





Tourism is highly competitive, and it is imperative that there is ongoing investment in infrastructure and services to continue to grow the visitor economy to Port Stephens.

Please contact me if you need anything further.

Yours sincerely,



Chairman



Local Councils such as Port Stephens possess almost monopolistic power in the provision and control of services to their local communities. This presents great opportunity and freedom for the Officers and Councillors in deciding the priority of projects and quantum of spending.

However realistically this also requires a moral responsibility and accountability, because monopoly by its very nature can promote lax control, including losses in productivity, wastage and indeed claims untested by a competitive market.

The passion of Mayor Palmer and Councillors is laudable. As residents we all desire better facilities, but there must be a true and honest accounting for the manner in which change is both promoted and progressed. Sadly, passion should not be mistaken for wisdom.

Our Council seems somewhat naive in its acceptance and understanding of the reports it has been provided. Judging by the sheer amount of material involved in the Special Rate Variation process, there must be some substantial consultancy fees accrued.

As a graduate mathematician, I know that any numbers quoted, depend entirely on the assumptions made in their derivation. The "Morrison Low" report referred by Mayor Palmer (\$43m spent on town centres provides economic benefit of \$109m) is based on an economic principle known as the "multiplier effect". This maintains that an amount of spending is multiplied in benefit as the funds flow through the community, from suppliers to workers and so on, each spending what to them is fresh income. If the veracity of this effect is to be relied upon, the figures claimed (without leakage) can only be correct if the initial and ongoing spending is fully contained within Port Stephens. That is, the employed or contracted workers all live in Port Stephens, spend all their income in Port Stephens, the street hardware etc is all built in Port Stephens from materials all produced in Port Stephens and so on.

Somewhat more alarmingly, the analysis and report fails to account for the funds removed from the community in payment of the related increase in land rates. Clearly, this does have an immediate local effect, removing disposable income or savings from homeowners, tenants and businesses quite directly. Indeed, it is easy to argue that the larger size of the rate impost and its direct local effect would negate all the positive effects of the town centre or any spending, spilling the breadth of this half truth promoted concept into a negative nett impact.

I raised the possible community cost of monopolistic power above, because when one totals the amount of spending and borrowing eloquently spruiked by Mayor Palmer, suspicions of cost blow outs and excessive overheads must arise.

Before any thought is given to expanding services, there should be constant realistic productivity monitoring covering the spectrum of existing rate and grant income. To paraphrase the late Kerry Packer, fully prove the productive use of existing income before we, as residents are forced to provide more. This includes containing costs through both administrative headcounts and consultant's fees.

Sadly the traditional three R's of Council operations – Roads, Rubbish and Recreation have in recent years been supplemented by a host of social services whose unmeasured productivity benefits and increasing personnel numbers and costs, remain in the shadows. A critical analysis of the necessity of these, many cost shifted from the NSW Government, needs to be completed.

Referring again to the town centre revitalisation, some unrealistic physical aspects of what is being promoted are no more adequately exposed than by the William St impression shown accompanying Mayor Palmer's article. This fails to highlight the dramatic differences in level between the northern and southern sides of William St. Furthermore, the removal of angle parking in a local centre reliant on transport by car, will do nothing to support the businesses facing William St.

From my own experience, I find this whole planning treatment most contradictory. As a rural resident I have for years made submissions to Council rural landuse studies, all shelved. Proper Council planning for the long term future of these valuable precincts and the financial and environmental investment of these residents, simply seems of little Council consequence.

Mayor Palmer please take stock, it is time to put the cart back behind the horse.

 He lives in Nelsons Plains and advises he is not a member of any political party.

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 3 December 2018 at 4:00:50 pm AEDT
To: <mayor@portstephens.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: SRV Impact on Renters

Dear Mayor Palmer,

Thanks again for the presentation on the SRV on Thursday evening and your willingness to consider the impact on struggling renters. I tender the following as background for your consideration. I have cleared this with our [REDACTED] who fully supports action on this matter.

The [REDACTED] essentially services the Tomaree Peninsula from Anna Bay to the East. We do on the average 50 house visits a month in this area in response to people in need of urgent assistance. Predominantly, the clients we see need help with food, electricity accounts, and fuel. These are usually the last things on which they spend their limited income after paying the rent. Their Centrelink Newstart or other pensions often barely covers the rent they pay, which typically ranges from \$400-\$500/week.

We interview clients and in addition to providing financial support for food, fuel and electricity, we often recommend services that may be helpful; eg, free budgeting advice, counselling, etc. We also help them with access to no-interest loans for essential goods and also provide furniture, whitegoods and clothing as well as vouchers to pay for essential pharmaceuticals and so forth. Our FY 2017/18 expenditure on client support was \$79,000 pa (some \$25,000 in excess of our anticipated budget). This excludes considerable expenditure on EAPA electricity vouchers, the cost of which is borne by the State government. Clearly the demand for emergency assistance is increasing.

We are all volunteers, around 20 in our conference involved in house visits, in additions those volunteers working in our two second-hand shops. The [REDACTED] smaller, but does similar work. [REDACTED] provides free laundry and meals one night a week for the same demographic. The empirical evidence from all these activities is that there are an increasing number of people living on the edge in this area.

As I indicated in our discussion, I have little doubt that the SRV rate rises will inevitably be passed on to renters by landlords and what would seem a small increase to many people on a steady wage or salary, can be a significant amount to the people we assist. Often \$50-\$100 food vouchers, for example, are seen by our clients as the difference between having meals for the next few days or not. Many of these people are single mums.

While Council has addressed assistance to pensioners and self-funded retirees for the impact of the SRV, as we discussed on Thursday evening, no such relief is available for renters. I have conferred with the [REDACTED] on this matter and on our discussion on Thursday and he agrees with me that any consideration Council could give to assist disadvantaged renters, would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

18/470040 (35)
1/4
The General Manager

Port Stephens Council

PO Box 42 Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

email: haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/ipr_council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

20 December 2018

Dear Mr Wallis

Re: PSC2017-01717-001 Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 7.5% over 7 years

The [REDACTED] objects to Port Stephens Council (PSC) submitting material, which may not be supported, to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in order to justify its application for a 7.5% rate increase.

All information must contain accurate information from stakeholders and must reflect the genuine concerns of the general public.

Our concern relates to Council's failure to consider that many focus areas of Soldiers Point are in fact part of a declared Aboriginal Place and would require consultation with the Worimi Local Land Council prior **any proposal within** the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place.

[REDACTED] especially brings to Council's attention the proposal in the SRV for a one off cost of \$500,000.00 to 'Provide formal car parking adjacent to Spencer Park to ease traffic congestion'.

We refer to Ordinary Council Meeting of 11 August 2015 Item 1 – Attachment 1. Submission of the Chief Executive Officer of the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council, Andrew Smith, dated 29th May 2015.

Focus Area 8: Tennis Courts (FA8)

"The workshop committee participant's object to additional parking being created in FA8; regardless of the area already being earmarked for car parking spaces and currently sitting within the gazetted road corridor" (better known as Soldiers Point Road)

RECOMMENDATION FOR FA8:

1. *"We do not believe there to be a need for additional car parking spaces in this area and encourage PSC to adopt the same understanding."*

We also refer to research by [REDACTED] – SRV Submission dated 19 December 2018

[REDACTED]

4. SOLDIERS POINT ABORIGINAL PLACE PLAN OF MANAGEMENT (SPAPPM)

Spencer Park was designated as Focal Area 8 (FA8) in the SPAPPM. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council dated 11th August 2015 Council agreed to endorse the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Place Plan of Management unanimously. Page 8 of Attachment 1 of the Council Minutes (also vide Attachment 2) contained the following statement from the Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council:

FA8

"The workshop committee participant's object to additional parking being created in FA8 regardless of the area already being earmarked for car parking spaces and currently sitting within the gazetted road corridor (better known as Soldiers Point Road).

RECOMMENDATION FOR FA8:

1. We do not believe there to be a need for additional car parking spaces in this area and encourage PSC to adopt the same understanding."

The proposal to widen Soldiers Point Road for additional parking is contrary to the SPAPPM

[REDACTED] question PSC's statement that angle parking at Spencer Park has been requested by ratepayers and residents. We do not believe this statement to be correct.

In the interests of transparency, where are the details of the estimates for this and other projects included in the estimates?

We further comment that Spencer Park has adequate parking to meet the needs of the children's playground, tennis courts and public space, and that this space in no way should be compromised by the intrusion of car parking. Such intrusion would necessitate fencing off the children's playground because of closer contact with parked vehicles.

The tennis Courts, public toilet and playground have adequate on street parking in Soldiers Point Road, Ridgeway Avenue and angle parking in Renshaw Avenue. The Community Hall and Thou Walla Sunset Retreat have their own parking area as has the Port Stephens Yacht Club.

Best haven as advised by submitter

We suggest that traffic congestion is compounded in Ridgeway Avenue at Soldiers Point by the lack of compulsory public parking for the Marina complex and patrons. The Marina is currently being permitted to operate without regard to its former consent conditions which are to provide, on its own property, an additional 17 car park spaces as required for operation of its business premises.

These consent conditions, dating back to 2011, for the Soldiers Point Marina seem to have been overlooked by Council. **(See Appendix)**

We pose the question - is it fair and reasonable, amongst other things, to attempt to justify a 7.5% SRV for Car Parking at Spencer Park, Soldiers Point when Council has received strong opposition to such a controversial proposal in the past and to bear the cost of \$500,000 for such a questionable proposition?

We cannot support the acquisition of community land in order to create angle parking within the park boundary caused in principle by the failure of the Marina to provide sufficient car parking in Ridgeway Avenue whilst the Marina complex car park lies idle?

The acquisition of community land along Soldiers Point Road is contrary to the Local Government Act 1993 – Section 47F *"Dedication of community land as public road."* We would therefore expect that PSC would immediately remove the cost of \$500,000.00 from SRV estimates and inform IPART of this amendment.


There is no clear consensus on many projects listed by Council and no guarantee that any of these projects will be placed on Council's capital works programme within the time frame mentioned. And if they are not, we do not see anywhere in the documents stating that the time frame and estimate of works has to be strictly adhered too. What is the penalty if these projects are not completed at all?

In conclusion, it would appear from previous surveys and perusal of submissions that the majority of ratepayers and residents strongly oppose the rate increase and the SPCG uphold that position.

Yours sincerely,


President 

Appendix:

Pages 1, 2 and 3 – Redacted letter from Port Stephens Council's 
dated 16 September 2011, regarding the Marina DA 2011-077. The letter states that the shortfall practically on site is 17.

A review of Council records and the car parking requirements as per the development consent history for Soldiers Point Marina has detailed that 28 spaces have been provided out of a total of 45 required by development consents. Therefore the shortfall practically on site is 17. To resolve any potential future compliance action, incorporating this existing car parking disparity into a future development design and consideration would be highly advantageous.

It is acknowledged that that development assessment process does not allow the consideration of the historical car parking deficiencies arising from the non compliance of former

Page 1



Telephone: 02 4980 0255 Fax: 02 4987 3612
Email: council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au Web: www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

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Port Stephens COUNCIL

... a community partnership

116 Adelaide Street, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

DX21406 ABN 14 744 377 876

Insurance, not dissimilar to previous projects you have cited including the vessel(s) arising from
several unique and locally experienced from other marine developments.

It's the view of Council that the proposed development would be deemed 'Designated Development' pursuant to Schedule 3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000, Clause 23 - Mooring and other related land and water mooring facilities. The specific triggers in this regard include a proposal that has an intended capacity of 30 or more vessels of any length and the ratio of car parking spaces to vessels is likely to be proposed at less than 0.5:1. Notwithstanding the declaration of the proposal as designated, given the scale of the development, it is envisaged the standard of Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) typically required would not differ substantially regardless from that of the required Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to accompany the designated proposal.

Just the recommendation is of value as you progress towards the completion of the new DA and accompanying information. Should you wish to be involved in a formal pre-emptive DA meeting, where a number of expert Council staff from various disciplines are involved, please contact the undersigned. It should be noted the correspondence is provided in good faith and does not fetter the assessment process for the future DA. Accordingly, a full and robust merit assessment in accordance with section 79C of the EPA Act is the mechanism for Council to conduct a detailed assessment and develop a formal position on the proposal.

If you have any further queries please contact the undersigned on 02 490 0214.



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 9:45 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: PSC 2017-01717-001 SUBMISSIONS DRAFT STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-29

For the Attention

General Manger Port Stephens Council

PSC 2017-01717-001 SUBMISSIONS DRAFT STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-29

The Anna Bay All Abilities Recreational Play Park proposal for 6 Fishermans Bay Road and 7 Birubi Lane . Anna Bay will complement and enhance the public assets Port Stephens Council is proposing for Anna Bay in the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2019 to 2029.

The four entries in the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2019-29 Attachment 3:Capital Works Plan Plus as follows:

Iris Moore Reserve development Anna Bay Scoping (\$150,000) (P290)
Iris Moore Reserve development – Anna Bay – Preliminary Works (\$3.7M) (P290)
Playground Assets Anna Bay Recreation/Birubi Lane Reserve (\$130,000) P297.
Public Amenities Assets – Birubi Lane Reserve Installation (\$130,000) P298

- The South Tomaree district is growing rapidly and in urgent need of the above four entries as set out in the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2019-29 Attachment 3: Capital Works Plan Plus Capital projects for Anna Bay, and form the basis of the Anna Bay All Abilities Recreation Play Park.
- The above mentioned projects should all be moved to the Special Rates Variation Capital Works listings as they have all been awaiting funding, in some cases, for several years. These projects will become the basis to stage the construction of the Anna Bay All Abilities Play Park.
- The Community suggestions for the Anna Bay All Abilities Recreational Play Park aim to enhance and complement the proposed new improvements for Robinson Reserve.
- It is proposed to have large all abilities public amenities both at Iris Moore Reserve and the Birubi Lane/Fishermans Bay Road Reserve.
- Public amenities are in very high demand and very needed in this area to service the ever increasing visitor numbers to our unique area. An essential service that is currently the cause of much pain to Port Stephens Council.
- Parking also another essential service that visitors require and that Port Stephens Council are already at breaking point for this area will be part of the overall plan for the Playground assets Anna Bay Recreation/Birubi Lane Reserve.
- It is a short Coastal walk to Robinson Reserve from Iris Moore Reserve and Birubi Lane Reserve.

Yours faithfully,

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 8:37 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: SRV PSC2017-01717-001

Councillors,

As a resident and owner of a property in Seaside Fern Bay I wish to express my strong objections personally for this Special Rate Variation.

Fern Bay has not been provided with basic community facilities for many years and looks like missing out again.

I was at the Council meeting to see the previous council take our S94 funds for a bowling club in Medowie. These developer contributions are design to provide these basic community facilities like connecting footpaths and cycleways to provide for safe connections to our community hall in Vardon road. We also need Public toilets, and decent bus shelters.

I was also at the Council meeting to see the current council debate and justify this Special Rate Variation and to hear first hand the case being presented. The case against this proposal by Councillor Giacomo Arnott was very well presented, from sound research, reflecting a keen understanding of the community feedback and real issues with this proposal. The other councillors basic arguments tried to minimise the impact and talk about the safety net discounts for pensioners. What about the many self funded retirees and couples with young families?

Over the next 7 years land values on which rates are calculated will most like also increase.

A quick look at where these funds are planned to be spent shows that Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove will miss out again.

This will be further impacted by the council's plan to repeal the S94 funds in one big bucket and potentially spend our developer community contributions in other parts of the Port Stephen Council region.

I would ask the council to carefully consider the basic needs of our community and allocate funding where it is needed.

Kind regards,

The General Manager - Port Stephens Council

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Objection: Proposed SRV of 7.5% from 2019_2020 (PSC 2018-02118)

My submission is **against** the 7.5% SRV proposal to be applied for by Port Stephens Council from the 2019_2020 financial year.

I have various concerns as follows;

- I believe the figures quoted in attempting to 'sell' the SRV to rate payers have been deliberately played down by only using the base rate in any calculation examples - a typical selling ploy to encourage people to 'buy' the product on offer - and are misleading.
- It's been quoted that average residents are paying approximately \$1,000.00 per year for base residential rates - however adding on the waste management charges the figure becomes approximately \$1,540.00 currently per year.
- There has not been mention of any increases to the waste management charges, but there is a rise every year - approx. \$80.00 over the last 5 to 6 years.
- It's also been reported that the increase is only \$1.70 per week (which is only approx. the cost of a newspaper); this escalates to \$15.00 per week by the seventh year which will add approximately \$1,000.00 to the average rate which will become \$2,500.00 - Heaven help us when land values increase and whatever else rises by \$1.70 to \$15.00 per week over the same period - which won't be wages or pensions.
- I understand Council will also be applying to retain the SRV at the end of the seven year period, so there will be no reprieve for rate payers - only another increase - the standard increase of 2.5% to look forward to & by that time Council will quite possibly apply for more SRV's.
- Approx. 40% of Port Stephens residents are unemployed or only work part time; assuming some are renters - any rate increase will be passed on to them via an increase in weekly rent ... according to Census 2016 figures the median rent for Port Stephens was \$305.00, in 2018 most rentals for 3-4 bedroom homes are advertised at \$470-500.00 (or more) per week ... how will they manage? Those that are home owners with a mortgage; it's only a few years ago that Port Stephens was listed among the highest mortgage defaulters in the state ... with these proposed rate increases many could be forced into that situation again.
- My partner & I, like many others are on a limited/fixed income, we have both been made redundant from our jobs in recent years (& the redundancy payments received were not at

all large by any means). I have been fortunate enough to find a part-time position but my partner has not - he has been forced to access his superannuation early. We still have a mortgage & the only concession we receive is a low-income health care card which enables us to save some money on medication costs. I am concerned how we would afford the proposed increases. As we've already been forced to access our superannuation early, we will not have much with which to supplement an aged pension when we become eligible.

- In 2010 Council had a \$30 million infrastructure backlog which was reduced to \$14.1 million by improving internal efficiencies and continual improvement to processes - all achieved without any special rate variations.
- As Council was able to reduce the infrastructure backlog by \$16 million over 7 to 8 years without any special rate variations, why is one necessary now? Why can't there be continual improvement to processes and efficiencies to reduce waste even more.
- This proposed SRV increase will also affect small businesses - the "trickle down" effect; landlords will pass on increases to tenants, businesses will pass their increased costs to customers (& not all customers are cashed up tourists!) - some businesses may not be able to absorb these costs & may end up closing - this seems to be in direct opposition to other proposals designed to assist small businesses (ie increase building height levels in Nelson Bay to attract development to increase the number of permanent residents which will increase trade for local businesses - & given the number of 'lifestyle village' developments that have been approved, the percentage of permanent residents in high rise in Nelson Bay will more than likely not change much).
- Of the projects proposed, Council will need to report to IPART annually and will need to provide updates against the specific projects nominated to ensure monies are spent as proposed - implying that funds HAVE to be spent on the specific projects, yet on page 5 of the Information Booklet that was distributed, it reads "the identified projects may change over time dependent on ongoing needs such as community preferences and other funding sources" - this seems to be a bit of a contradiction?
- The *Capital Works Program 2019-2029 SRV Only* document makes reference to 'Pavement Reseal - Additional SRV program' \$500,000 per year over 7 years - is there to be yet another SRV application on top of that already proposed?
- With reference to the pavement reseals above - how would these funds be used and on which roads? Or will it be a continuation of the patchwork we are currently seeing?
- I mentioned above the increases in residents of the over 55 lifestyle villages; eg Sunrise on Nelson Bay Road with close to 200 dwellings approved - these villages are all advertised

as "no council rates to pay". I realise the operator/owner would pass on any increases to council rates through the weekly service fee BUT these residents will not be impacted by a 7.5% SRV anywhere near as much as the average rate payer.

- I note that Council does have a financial hardship policy (which one would have to be in really dire straits to qualify for) and that there will be concessions for pensioners which is a positive for some.
- The council's information booklet on the SRV states that Port Stephens LGA rates are 30% lower than Maitland and Newcastle LGA's. What isn't mentioned is that Maitland and Newcastle have both already been granted SRV's in 2014_15 and 2015_16 respectively which helps account for the variation.
- Residents of Maitland and Newcastle also have a 9 to 13% higher average yearly income than those in Port Stephens which increases their ability to absorb an SRV.
- Despite lower rates being charged, our council spent 6% more on Administration than Maitland & 9% more on "Other Services" whatever they may be - perhaps some savings can be made in these two areas?
- The fact that Port Stephens Council has been one of the lowest rate charging Councils for several/many years is something to be proud of - applying for an SRV of 7.5% over 7 years and to retain it afterwards, which carries with it the strong possibility of forcing many ratepayers into financial hardship is not.



Submission on Integrated Planning and Reporting Documents.

Friday 21st December 2018

There is a great deal of optimism in the IPR documents and I wonder how closely Council will follow the plans and what results will be achieved in the long term. My comments below are mainly focused on Raymond Terrace.

There seems to be a high focus, almost an obsession, with removing trees. While public safety must be a major priority the process must be well balanced with suitable replacements planted as trees are removed and trees only removed if absolutely necessary.

The relocation of the Raymond Terrace Council Depot to the area adjacent to the Administration building is a stunner. No mention of this as an option in the alternatives put forward, just an off the cuff decision at the last moment? The Depot will be an essential part of any operational plan during an emergency but could be put out of action by flooding in this location. There has also been recent discussion of the Administration building being overloaded and possibly needing to be upgraded or relocated. This area should be kept for commercial development similar to the Marketplace with under cover parking and businesses above, safely out of flood reach. The new Depot will be a bit more than light industry and as such should be located in an appropriate area.

The planned upgrade to William St and King St is rightly given high priority but the community must be given the opportunity to comment on the final design concept. Drainage is a major concern in the Raymond Terrace CBD and the planned upgrade to William Street may be an opportunity to investigate how this could be improved by diverting water to the outside of the catchment protected by the levee system. Plans for a decent storm water pump out system need to be investigated (think Holland).

The plan to improve paths and cycle ways is great but I could not find a reference to completing the link under the bypass at Grahamstown Canal underpass. There may be another opportunity here to ease the drainage problem in the CBD. When the new pathways are put into Boomerang Park, a little wise contouring could steer runoff water away from the CBD catchment.

Boomerang Park is correctly identified as a Regional Park and as such should have more attractions that will bring visitors in. The splash pad planned for Lakeside Swim Centre needs to be in Boomerang Park. On a hot day kids do not need to swim, they will be happy if they can just get wet and cool off. Council also needs to recognize the detrimental effect that sacrificing part of Boomerang Park for housing development will have and it is a step in the wrong direction. The potential for recreational development in the Park, if correctly planned will lead

to a facility that can truly be called a Regional Park. The Boomerang Park Master Plan needs to be revisited and reverted back to the original plan.

I support the proposed SRV in principle but it will need to be well managed and closely monitored. If the community generally wants to see the many proposed improvements it will need to be prepared to pay. However if it becomes obvious that the number of rate defaults and hardship caused is climbing too high, steps will need to be taken to address this. Obviously there will need to be a system in place to closely monitor and measure results and take action before it becomes a crisis.

Yours sincerely,



Concerned resident and rate payer.

18/4/82/4 (40)
1/2

Submission objecting to Port Stephens Council proposed SRV and related Integrated Plans

PSC2017-01717-001

The General Manager

Port Stephens Council

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

I made an online submission during the first round of consultation chiefly objecting to the extent of the rate rise and particularly for a 7-year period.

After reviewing the latest documents and discussing with many people, attending public meetings and reviewing comments in the press and social media I am still of the same opinion.

It is with some hesitation that I take the time to write this submission so close to Christmas, as the current Council appear to have ears to the unknown who supposedly support their ideas and appear to ignore most submissions that strongly objected. I am yet to see any confirmation that Council have received support from the residents for their proposals from the people I have meet, reviewing written submissions, online forms, at public meetings or the Councils own telephone polling during the SRV consultation period and recently with the Nelson Bay Implementation Plan. Many submissions in the first round noted the 7-year period was too long, yet no proposals have been presented by Council for a shorter period.

I agree that the general public would like to see improvements but at a sensible pace and within a manageable budget. The list of SRV projects reads like a typical politician's pork barrelling election promise, something for everybody. I believe that the general public are willing to pay extra for a few well selected projects in a shorter time period and once Council have proven that they are capable then another round of SRV projects would be warmly received if economic conditions are favourable.

I do not believe that this current term of council has the right to commit a tax on the ratepayers not only for the next election cycle but well into the following term. In reality it is actually worse as the proposed implementation plan will take at least 10 years and the loans may extend through to 20 years.

I welcome the Business Case Cost Benefit Analysis: Town Centre Revitalisation Projects - Port Stephens Council (Morrison Low report), it is unfortunate that I have only had one week to study the report. I have some concerns about the overall result, particularly for Nelson Bay as there is no breakdown of how the \$15m will be distributed between the three projects, Public Domain Plan, Apex Park Masterplan and new car parking facilities. I don't know what type or location of carparking is proposed, one central location will have a very different cost benefit ratio than a carpark located at the extreme edges of the town. Having said this I do believe that there is a positive benefit to revitalisation of the town centres.

Although I believe a lot more work is required in preparing a detailed business plan for the Town Centre Revitalisation Project, I would agree to the SRV raising \$42m only for this project. This could be achieved at a lower percentage increase but more importantly over a shorter time period than 7 years.

The other projects listed are all worthy when Council can afford to implement them through external funding which the Council has been successful in obtaining over the last 12 months or from the annual depreciation or development S96 funds.

All projects must comply with the Council's goal P1.1 Support sustainable business development and E2 Environmental sustainability.

Although I may be able to afford the proposed 7.5% over 7 years, I have serious concerns that many businesses will have trouble with the proposed increase, particularly as they are paying at a higher rate now and into the future as a result of the previous levy imposed on them. Businesses hopefully will see an increase in their business to offset the increases, however the renters and working poor will find it very difficult. Pensioners may receive some extra assistance, but I remain concerned about the others in the community on a lower income.

Regards



Nelson Bay 2315

20/12/2018

The General Manager,
Stephens Council
PO Box 42, Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

20 December 2018

Dear Mr Wallis

Re: PSC2017-01717-001 Special Rate Variation of 7.5% over 7 years

I wish to lodge my objection to this rate variation for the following reasons;

1. I doubt the veracity of the figures quoted particularly for work so far in the future, do you have quotes and guarantees these will be honored when the project is completed?
2. When these projects go over budget and over time as some are sure to do, what will have to be sacrificed to cover the short fall?
3. Why is there no attempt to solve existing issues the council has eg Lagoons Estate legal fees and past mismanagement bungles, council owned caravan parks running at a loss for years?
4. I have lived in Soldiers Point for 12 years and have never seen a parking problem around Spencer Park. I believe this is just a land grab for the Marina who have failed to comply with council requirement to provide their own parking. By taking down the trees lining the street you are destroying the ambiance of the neighborhood.
5. I seriously doubt the council has a problem booking sports grounds as I drive past most of them are never used. I would like to see a list of the bookings for this year.
6. Perhaps the council could stop paying for courses and expenses for the mayor and a counselor so they can just add this to their CV.
7. There doesn't seem to be any allowance for rising sea levels which is a project that will probably need to be addressed in the next 50 years but should be studied now as this could be very expensive and affect the whole inlet.

Until these items are addressed I can only hope IPART either reject the variation or at least cut it back, the council will still get its cpi adjustment.

Yours sincerely

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 20 December 2018 6:35 PM
To: SwitchPC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Integrated Planning and Reporting documents revised to include the Special Rate Variation PSC2017-01717-001

Importance: High

SRV and special Rates PSC2017-01717-001

Dear Councillors

We were asked for our submissions and also have our say at the Meetings.

However, despite 70%+ rejecting the increases, Council still have stated that they will be introducing the

1. increases that will more than double our rates with no special concessions.
2. Rates will never be reduced after the SSRV period of 7 years
3. What are the reasons for relocating the Council Depots at a cost of over \$ 2.5 Million
4. Why are we spending over \$ 1.5 for the Tomaree Sports Complex upgrades , when all is needed is new Toilets. (In addition State Govt. have approved a Grant for this ? So why do we have to spend additional funds
5. I had asked the Council as to what changes they were making to Council administration to reduce costs?
6. What are the total Costs and individual costs and payments to Councillors and Staff.
7. What is being done to improve our Road repairs? We have to constantly have to repair the same pot holes due to poor attention to the repairs. I had suggested an improved repair or roads material using Recycled Glass as asphalt, which we have used for heavy Machinery and Truck movements for over 15 Yr.= with no detonation.
8. When I asked the [REDACTED] , was fobbed off.
9. Who reviews expenditure and proper utilization of funds. When asked about this at our Meetings, was informed that review Committee looks at them. In any ordinary Private Organisation , we would have Bi-Weekly reviews of progress and Expenditure.
10. We have wasted considerable monies on the Salamander Shopping Centre roads by the Library that does do benefit to the Public. Again , no response from the engineers.
11. Excessive costs to build the Nelson Bay Magnus street bypass with a single One-way road instead of the ideal 2 way street. Again no response from the Engineers and council
12. Costs involved in the legal fight re the Lagoons estate
13. Why not charge the Sand Mining Companies for the removal of sand, with a slight increase of \$1 per tonne. This will more than cover the required funding for all the new projects. Can you please advise what we are charging the companies per tonne.
14. Make the Sand mining companies pay additional costs to cover our Road repairs, as they are the major contributors to the road damage.
15. Why are we giving Council grants to the Native People organisations, and yet not to our seniors and Pensioners, who have paid all their Taxes and rates for their entire lives

We have elected the councillors to represent us, yet once elected, they seem to think they have no responsibility to the residents, and work to their own agenda

Would appreciate a response to my comments

Regards

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 20 December 2018 4:32 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: PSC 2017-01717-001

NB. I would like to see more money allocated to combat erosion at Conroy Park. This is a popular site which is suffering greatly from the King Tides that we are experiencing on a regular basis & will I believe require substantial intervention if the situation is to be addressed.

Regards,

[REDACTED]
Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 10:42 AM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: SRV

Good morning,

I wish to make **some** comments, time restricts me from providing way more, regarding the projects outlined for action as a flow on of the SRV currently being sought by Council. Note my comments highlighted in red. First I must admit that Council have done a relatively good job in managing costs and expenditure over time, probably would have even been more successful without the burden of costs of litigation.

Quote from the SRV brochure:=

"We can't escape the fact that we have parts of our local government area that need significant work..... agreed The projects we're talking about will stimulate the local economy, drive business growth, attract visitors, fill empty streets and enhance our region for the benefit of all....."

There seems to be a massive lean towards looking after the visitor population who are in general itinerant, to the detriment of residents who are here year-round. Residents should come before tourists for when it is all said and done, Council is supposed to be representing us.

To meet growing demands, however, Council is now considering an IPART application for a SRV across all rate categories. A proposed SRV would be used to:

- *construct new priority infrastructure projects* fair enough to some degree
- *increase maintenance and renewal schedules of existing infrastructure, and* ** I think many would agree that if for example, roadworks were done better in the first place, using better materials, then the frequency of renewal schedules could be reduced.
- *introduce a number of enhanced services.* When funds are limited, enhanced services should be restricted to necessary enhanced services rather than 'what would be nice to have'.

The level of the proposed SRV would determine the range of projects - the higher the SRV, the more projects Council would be able to undertake.

East Ward

Nelson Bay depot relocation \$2.5m 2020 to 2023 further in the document \$10m is touted as the cost for relocating both depots, double the amount stated here (\$2.5m each)???

Implement the Tomaree Sports Complex master plan, Salamander Bay \$3m 2023 to 2024 the funding proposed raises a lot of eyebrows!

Implement the Nelson Bay town centre and foreshore strategy \$15m 2021 to 2027 wow, that's serious spending!!!

Central Ward

Birubi Tourist Information Centre, Anna Bay \$3m 2026/27 shouldn't the tourist operators perhaps form a co-operative and between them, provide a fair portion of this cost, as they are the ones benefiting from the patronage? Admittedly the economy does benefit from every \$ spent in tourism as it does from all other expenditure.

West Ward

King Park Sports Complex, Raymond Terrace masterplan projects \$3m 2024 to 2026 the funding proposed raises a lot of eyebrows!

Raymond Terrace depot relocation \$2.5m 2020 to 2023 see above

Community Art Centre, Raymond Terrace \$2m 2027 to 2029 is this really what people want at the expense of better roads etc??

New path and cycleways at:

Raymond Terrace missing links \$1m 2019-2021

Brandy Hill \$2m 2027/2028 admittedly there was a death in the area and there is no price on life, but in reality, how does the cost/benefit ratio stack up against spending that money in more populated areas??

Sealing roads into carparks

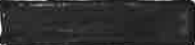
| | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Birubi Information Centre | \$3m one off cost | The proposed Birubi Information Centre has been designed to provide increased car and coach parking, reduce congestion and other site access issues around visitor activity at Birubi Point. It will provide a sheltered area and space for dune operators and amenities, see comments above |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--|

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|
| DEPOTS Depot relocation & refurbishment | COST \$10m one off cost | DETAILS Relocate Nelson Bay depot to Salamander Bay Waste Transfer Station and rehabilitate existing site. Relocate Raymond Terrace |
|---|-------------------------------|---|

Re: Road resealing and upgrades refer comments above **

I really could keep going but need to attend to the calls of my business.


Regards,



Medowie



Submission on Port Stephens Council Integrated Planning documents revised to include Special Rate Variation (SRV)


Introduction

 seeks to represent the interests of ratepayers and residents on the Tomaree Peninsula. Port Stephens Council will appreciate that its proposal for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) is a matter which affects all ratepayers, renters of property, businesses and farmers in our community.



 has attended many of the council's public consultation sessions, conducted its own public meeting attended by some 85 members of the community, studied the explanatory literature published by Council and examined the guidelines and criteria on the IPART website. We have also noted the responses to council's community engagement programme which indicated a significant majority of the community opposed the SRV proposed rate increase. (See results of Surveys and analysis of submissions)

The need for the proposed SRV

We have noted the much-repeated claim that many of the community's requests for improved infrastructure and services could not be funded from the current revenue base and that the only option remaining is a substantial SRV. To this end council has approved an application to IPART for a 7.5% cumulative increase in rates yielding \$71.8m additional revenue above the rate peg. This is to be leveraged by loans of \$60 m over 20 years which would enable Council to deliver an ambitious list of projects for infrastructure, enhanced services and asset renewal.

 queries the claim that the only way of delivering significant projects is an SRV of 7.5% magnitude over 7 years. The General Manager's recent Informe article entitled *Shining Bright in Port Stephens* reported that council had delivered (in the last year) "more than \$28 million worth of major projects, including building the Fern Bay Community Centre, Yacaaba Street extension, and Fingal Bay rural fire station to name a few. We've also upgraded key roads, pathways, amenities and boat ramps across Port Stephens although there's plenty more to do".

This indicates that there is already a substantial capacity to fund asset maintenance and new projects, drawing on sources such as grants, reserves current revenue streams and loans.

 notes that the application to IPART will include among necessary "projects" funding of a number of asset maintenance backlogs and/or service or quality increases. It has not been made clear in the documentation why the Council has such an asset maintenance backlog having regard for its usual annual provision for depreciation. The SRV bid does refer to increased standards of service but  believes it should be made clear what is the apportionment of any SRV increase for this purpose between spending on asset maintenance backlog and enhancement of services. Furthermore, there would seem to be

a need for some indication of just what is proposed in the way of increased levels of service or quality of assets.

To more fully address the issues in the above paragraph, it would be appreciated If Council could provide answers to the following questions:

1. What is the estimated financial value of Councils refurbishment capital backlog as of end 2017/18 financial year?

2. Why has this capital refurbishment backlog occurred, given Council has an annual depreciation allocation for refurbishment of assets? Is it

- a) Councils valuation of its assets is in error? Or
- b) Councils productivity and performance in delivering the projects was not industry efficient? Or
- c) Depreciation funds have been diverted to non-refurbishment activities? Or
- d) Other reasons than above? Please quantify.

3. If the answer to 2 above is b) What is Council doing to ensure its performance is industry competitive in the refurbishment of its asset base? How is this bench marked and demonstrated to the community?

4. If the answer to 2 above is c)? Where has these funds been diverted? Can Council provide a list of the initiatives and their respective costs and an explanation as to why?

5. Council in the SRV is proposing to increase the frequency of the level of service in refurbishment of its assets. Can Council please quantify whether this is either;

- a) an increase in Council's historical refurbishment capital performance to achieve the specified asset condition standards of service in the pre-SRV SAMP or
- b) a proposal to offer a higher level of asset condition standards of service in the capital refurbishment of assets?

6. If the answer is b), what is the cost increase to the annual depreciation allocation that will result?

7. Can Council provide assurance that the Commercial Businesses' asset are self-funding in their historical years and 10 year forward year projections with respect to;

- a) both refurbishment and enhancement capital works? and
- b) operations and maintenance?

The premise being that Council provides assurance that general rates revenue is not being used to cross subsidise these businesses in any way?

The Impact of the 7.5 % option

The supporting material for the SRV does not adequately address the possible extent of hardship which may be the result of the proposed increases. In particular no comment is offered in relation to the impact on renters or the business community many of whom are also renters. [REDACTED] in its earlier submission raised the potential for smaller retail and commercial businesses to be severely stressed by the extent of the rate hikes on business property which have an already high base rate reflecting an earlier special levy. We do not want any more empty shops in Nelson Bay.

We acknowledge that hardship relief measures have been included in the SRV package, but these do not appear to extend to renters or to the business rate payers.

The proposed project priorities

[REDACTED] accepts that the projects nominated for funding are desirable in a utopian sense. The "something for everybody" approach obviously underlies the need to pursue the high rate increase factor and the extended time financing scenario with 20-year loan obligations.

[REDACTED] now believes that a more acceptable approach would be to establish a less ambitious list of projects based on a more rigorous prioritisation. This would need to have regard to cost/ benefit criteria and where appropriate, serious business cases to establish on- going feasibility.

The quantum of the proposed rate increase could be reduced and the time for cumulative rate rises brought back to say 3-4 years.

If such evidence of need and sustainability was demonstrable, the proposal would have more chance of being accepted by the community and IPART.

Looking to the Future




If the council succeeds with its application, which is at the higher end of the options normally granted by IPART, this will commit future Councils and ratepayers to an ongoing financial regime based on high rates and loan servicing commitments as well as demanding implementation responsibilities.

[REDACTED] suggests that a less ambitious project list and shorter period for rate rises would be much more saleable to the community and allow the necessary flexibility to respond to the changing social, business, technical and financial conditions. There would be greater opportunity to assess the success of Council in delivering the programme and If proven, there would be an option of applying to IPART for an extension of the SRV.

[REDACTED]
President

Phone [REDACTED]

21 December, 2018


NELSON BAY NSW 2315
Phone: 02 


Port Stephens Council

19th December 2018

PO Box 42

Raymond Terrace NSW 2324

Dear Sir,

Proposed introduction of a Special rate Variation [SRV] for Port Stephens

We would like to take the opportunity of supporting the proposed Special Rate Variation [SRV] for the Port Stephens Local Government Area.

We strongly believe that Port Stephens has been falling behind in providing appropriate and adequate infrastructure to meet a growing community particularly for Services, Sporting, Cycleways, Tertiary Education and appealing Town Centres. In fact, the LGA has had strong residential growth over many years and the required infrastructure has simply not kept pace.

Port Stephens Council has now provided leadership by adopting a forward-thinking approach to the future infrastructure needs for Port Stephens. In fact, many of our shopping centres have lost their appeal and sense of Community creating the need for residents to shop outside the LGA. For example, many Raymond Terrace residents do much of their shopping at the Greenhills Centre in East Maitland. This is having a strong leakage and subsequent detrimental impact on the Port Stephens economy.

Also, for example, Nelson Bay [which has been identified in the Hunter Regional Plan as a "Strategic Centre" based on its Tourism potential] has completely lost its **"shine and appeal" both to Visitors and the local community**. This accordingly is having a detrimental impact on the local economy and Jobs Growth and in particular the Tomaree Peninsula. Economic Leakage is unfortunately a feature of our LGA and of course disappointing having regard to the fact that we have strong residential growth. In particular many young people need to travel outside the LGA for work and Tertiary Education.

It is also very important that the Project funding from the Special Rate Variation [SRV] is equitably funded between the **Three [3] Wards** and that the projects are appropriately prioritised. For example, Nelson Bay Town Centre is languishing and has a very tired appearance and appeal, so we therefore believe **it needs to be very high priority**. For example, it has an **old dilapidated partly decommissioned Multi Deck Carpark** in Donald St which reflects a very poor image on the Town centre and to Visitors and our Community. Bear in mind Nelson Bay was an Iconic Centre for the visiting public and accordingly this structure reflects poorly on Port Stephens as a destination. In our view the future of this Multi deck parking structure should be **"top priority" in the allocation of SRV project prioritisation** and this view is shared by Nelson Bay NOW as well as the broader Tomaree Peninsula community.

In broad terms we strongly support the application of the proposed Special Rate Variation [SRV] for Port Stephens so that the infrastructure backlog can be addressed for a rapidly growing LGA particularly on the Tomaree Peninsula. We have become a dormitory suburb of Newcastle - is that what we want?

Yours sincerely,


President

MEDOWIE NSW
21st December 2018

council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au

Ref: File No psc2017-01717-001

PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL SPECIAL RATE VARIATION APPLICATION TO IPART

Dear Sir or Madam,

My Wife and I attended a discussion Forum at Medowie Community Centre on the Survey to apply for a Special Rate Variation for Council Land Rates with various options of 2.5%(exsting), 6.5% 7.5% and 8.5% over each of the next 7 years and then amended to a fixed 7.5%.

I can well understand the Council's wish to improve the amenity and services of the Port Stephens Council Local government Area and it is commendable that an interest in their area is the position taken by the Council. I am sure many residents would be pleased to enjoy the fruits of the improved amenities proposed.

However, the spending power of our local population including many working as well as pension dependant and retired folk has changed dramatically over the last 10 years or so. There are many residents of the Port Stephens Council Area now not seeing increased incomes over this last 10 years or so falling behind CPI increments and suffering hardship. A Rate Rise would be catastrophic to their financial well - being and pushing past the CPI based figure should just be out of the question.

Personal wealth for many has had a demographic change with a general money shift from the 'many to the few'. This means lowered expectations and aspirations for many working and retired folk. The Councils aspirations also need to be tempered to match this general shift. There will be time enough in the future to catch up with Councils aspirations when Wages, Pension and Investment returns to Self - Supporting Retired commence there upward trend as is being called for in many recent studies. Recent bank and associated financial organisations blatant lack of integrity and moral attitudes to their customers have not helped any of the categories of residents intended to be represented in this letter.

People are hurting, don't strike an increase at this time, and wait for the general financial well - being upswing that surely must occur to our local and our country economy.

I can supply details of the financial demographic shift caused by Wage Rise Stagnation, Commonwealth Pension adjustments and Interest Rate Record Lows affecting your residents as well as reported misdemeanours of the financial sector affecting the same group.

Our NSW State Government has demonstrated recently considerable financial success I therefore suggest the NSW State Government provide the additional monies to improve the Port Stephens area if it is considered essential and urgent. Your residents are unable to satisfy this need at this time as they have more basic survival issues to contend with.

Your planned "financial assistance measures" will only further aggravate a new group of marginalised residents who will be unable to receive the proposed benefits.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

COMMENTS ON SPECIAL RATE VARIATION PROJECT PROPOSALS – [REDACTED] CORLETTE

I have previously made a submission about SRV projects in the last round of community consultation. I have an expectation that both that submission and this one will be sent to IPART for consideration should Port Stephens Council decide in February to proceed with the SRV application. Some comments are repeated here from my last submission as I found it quite disappointing that many seemed to have been ignored.

I am an active community volunteer and my comments are based on my experience and personal observation of Council for many years in these roles. Because of this more direct involvement with Council I'm one of the few who understand the need for some kind of rate rise – albeit for the right projects! My involvement includes:-

- [REDACTED] since 2007 as [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED] 2005-2007 when [REDACTED] were disbanded and replaced by Council with [REDACTED]
- Previous [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] and a member since its formation in 2008
- Current member of [REDACTED] – working to improve Nelson Bay CBD
- Current member of [REDACTED]

I still remain unconvinced that the project listings have any resemblance at all to existing capital works which have been on the "Never Never" lists for many many years. There are so many good projects on the Capital Works Plus listing that are not appearing on the SRV listings. I'm left to wonder if the SRV is just a new Mayor and new Councillors "wish list" all compiled to make it look "fair" right across the Shire.

Just one example from the Draft SAMP – Attachment 3: Capital Works Plan Plus Anna Bay:

Community Hall Assets – Anna Bay Multi-purpose Community & Recreation Facility Construction (\$1.5M) (P290)

Iris Moore Reserve development Anna Bay Scoping (\$150,000) (P290)

Iris Moore Reserve development – Anna Bay – Preliminary Works (\$3.7M) (P290)

Playground Assets Anna Bay Recreation/Birubi Lane Reserve (\$130,000) P297.

Public Amenities Assets – Birubi Lane Reserve Installation (\$130,000) P298

Why have these very worthy projects not been included in the SRV? Other projects for Anna Bay are concentrated around the Birubi Surf Club end of Anna Bay which is the focus area for tourism, and to a lesser extent, local people. The areas above have been neglected for too long and there is a great need for development of play space & upgraded community facilities. The community has some exciting ideas for the Iris Moore Reserve, Birubi Lane and the adjacent Scout Hall area. Even if successful with separate grant applications, a \$ for \$ contribution should be available to them.

.....AND EAST WARD RATEPAYERS PAY MORE!

What I don't understand is that East Ward ratepayers pay a larger proportion of rates because of the value of their land than other parts and yet there has been this seemingly noble effort to spread the SRV project \$s right across the Shire. For example, why I might ask do we give a first coat seal to a road used by a couple of houses when, by comparison, we have the same work proposed and timing for carparks along Corlette foreshore Dogs off Leash area and used by thousands each week? I don't believe that's fair at all!

Similarly, when the reduction from Option 4 to Option 3 was made, a huge sum has just "disappeared" for the necessary restoration works required along Conroy Park/Sandy Point foreshore. The \$s allocated are laughable compared to the potential costs involved in doing this work properly and to last a lifetime. The studies have been done long ago, now for implementation and proper funding – not kicked further down the road. \$700,000 over 3 years is a mere "drop in the bucket" compared to what is needed.

Roadworks also seems to have taken a big hit now that Option 3 is the approved option. Ask any ratepayer what their highest priority is and there would be no prizes for guessing that roadworks could come out on top. So why has Council ditched a huge amount from this SRV for road improvements? The ones left in are laughable. Fixing our current roads used by thousands each day properly rather than first sealing a heap of country roads used by a handful of residents is far from "fair"! There should be a criteria based on usage rather than "returning favours to mates"!

Similar to roads, drainage is an important basic service we all expect Council to provide and fund yet a large chunk of that has also been kicked down the road with the change to Option 3. Many other lesser "wish lists" should be kicked off the list and replaced with basic services.

I fully support the Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy (without the high rise – separate from SRV) as this is the main economic driver of tourism in this area. It has been neglected in funding for more than 10 years. I am disappointed at the implementation timetable, particularly the reinstatement of the parking station which should be highest priority and moved forward quickly. I do not understand why the same amount is proposed to be spent at Raymond Terrace which looks good and serves the community quite well now as a retail and industrial town – especially given its close proximity to the bigger opportunities in Newcastle and Maitland? Why?? To be "fair" It's clearly NOT! If the lovely heritage street is to be improved, then the highest priority should be to fix the drainage first. No shopkeeper in their right mind wants to start a shop there and be flooded out! Reality check please!

Tree Management – My major concern is the amount still in the SRV for removal of so called "hazardous" trees, mostly without consultation, from our parks and reserves. Insurance is being overstated to scare people. If this is for an additional position then the focus should be on planting and replacement and more street planting not on bringing more trees down. **This should however be excluded from the SRV funding** model and Council employ more environmentally qualified staff to make up for the huge shortfall compared to all the other sections of Council. This should come from recurrent funding. Underqualified staff are making judgements on trees – many of which do NOT need to come down.

For the health and safety of all residents, part of the SRV should be provision for a large budget item to provide for the installation of sun shades to all picnic tables right across the Shire. No mention of shades, only playgrounds, and, based on past experience, installed without them. Port Stephens Council continues to win awards for work health and safety and yet this basic requirement of protection from the sun by our locals and visitors is not being provided. What a contradiction? Similarly playground equipment sun shades are not part of the funding mix for replacement and improvements to playgrounds.

I am also astonished about the lack of Pathway funding in East Ward, given that the population is 45% over 60 (2016 census) and the favourite "sport" (as per Tomaree Sports Masterplan community consultation) is walking....and we pay the most rates! There are so many missing links and perilous sections that need attention now – not in 10 years time when the Baby Boomers impact lessens. We need the safe paths now – not later.

An entry consistently low in listings is Sports Assets and yet we are told that about \$4M has been set aside for outstanding maintenance and the like on sporting facilities throughout the Shire. Where is the priority listing for these and why are most not included within the Capital Works project listings? For example, the Port Stephens Yacht Club overlooking the Soldiers Point Marina (and located adjacent Thou Walla Resort and within the Soldiers Point Aboriginal Management Plan) is not listed anywhere and yet the Council owned sporting facility building has had the upstairs verandah out of action and propped up for near on 2 years. This is a facility with an outstanding view and is now unsuitable for functions because of the risk to patrons not now being allowed on the balcony. Where's the funding for that? Refer to GGM Facilities and Services – however, it should be on the SRV list as a separate item.

Missing from the public amenities replacement listings are several which do not have disabled facilities. They are the same vintage as many on the list. I would be interested to know how they were prioritized? There is no provision for popular Conroy Park and East Bagnall at Corlette(doggie beach) and at Fly Point adjacent one of the most popular swimming spots in Nelson Bay. It is also the toilet block which services public functions such as Australia Day, Carols and the like, with no disabled access.

Similarly consideration for new public amenities is not included anywhere. There should be an opportunity at Corlette at Corlette Point Park for example where we have one of the best playground areas and yet there is no publicly available toilet block as The Anchorage does not provide this facility and it's a car drive to Conroy Park with little ones. There should have been Section 94 (now 7.11) funds allocated to provide for a basic toilet facility along the pathway which leads from the new Vantage Estate to the Salamander Shopping Centre – a highly used path and one which is a long stretch between stops. There is not even an accessible water tap along that whole pathway.

There is no mention of developing Medowie Depot into a back up horticultural facility –one already started by community members. This should be funded and supported as part of any Depot relocation. I only support Nelson Bay depot relocation provided it goes to Salamander Recycle area and not into another public space. It's an eyesore. Once moved, it should be a Park and

Ride carpark (for both Nelson Bay & Salamander) and not ripped up for another sporting field (as per the Tomaree Sporting Complex "Masterplan"!

What happened to the funding for the sealing of the Shoal Bay carpark, previously in Option 4? It is not appearing on the lists and yet this is the "go to" carpark for the thousands of visitors to Shoal Bay. If not given decent priority Council will hamper further development in Shoal Bay. It would seem to me that part of the Tennis Club under-utilised "picnic area" could be turned into a carpark as well. There is now a new playground in that location (albeit across the road) which has increased the need for more parking spaces all year round.

MY ANALYSIS OF SAMP ATTACHMENT 4

Due to the complexity and volume of all the Integrated Planning documents, it is impossible for an average ratepayer to read, understand, cross check and comment on all the information. Hence I have concentrated my additional comments on the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan and particularly the attachments 4 (P300-337) and 5 (P338-351) where the potential timeline and costings are located.

I have also included comments on the non-SRV projects listed for 2019-20 in Attachment 4 and ask that these be directed to the appropriate Council officers for IMMEDIATE consideration – outside of the SRV process.

P300 - 2019-20 Holiday Park – Halifax New Amenities Block – With a \$2M budget, this should be built in such a way as to provide Unisex toilet facilities accessible to Lot 424 which is currently outside the fenceline. Please refer this comment to the GGM Corporate Services.

P302 – SRV Parks & Reserves Assets – George Reserve \$71,428 BBQs, shelter & seating – Will this budget be reduced to factor in a recent Community Partnerships grant of \$30,000

P302 SRV Parks & Reserves - Foreshore Improvements – Conroy Park Coastal Process Study Outcomes implementation – Refer to previous comments! This is my major concern on SRV funding.

P304 – Playgrounds – Playground assets 2019-20 Bagnall Beach West Replacement \$70,000. This amount should be increased to provide full fencing for this playground. It is located at the end of the Bartlett Cycleway and busy Sandy Point Road and the adjacent highly used carpark for dogs off leash beach. Refer to GGM Facilities and Services please.

P304 SRV – Public Amenities Assets – Neil Carroll Park Nelson Bay Replacement (\$120,000) Is the current structure to remain? Only recently Council funded a cultural grant for a lovely mural to be done on this building. Suggest that instead the Public Amenities at Fly Point should take its place. It is the same vintage as most of the others listed on the SRV.

P304-305 – SRV 2019-20 Missing from Sports Assets lists is *Sports Facilities – Sports Assets – Boyd Oval – Construction of a new multi-purpose amenities building (\$1M) (P298 on Capital Works Plan Plus)* Why was this project not transferred to SRV listings – Obviously needed as reported in the Examiner – the facility is falling to pieces. It is not enough to say that this will be

included within the relatively meager amount set aside for Sports maintenance. This should be a separate item and other less important projects shafted.

P304 SRV 2019-20 Public Amenities Assets – Henderson Park, Lemon Tree – replacement. (\$120,000) Why? This is one of the best renovated toilet blocks of the old vintage and it also includes disabled facilities. The community worked on this and did a fantastic job. This is a most unjustified waste of money. If there are plans for a Marine facility, there's plenty of room elsewhere for that? Why pull this down? Move Fern Bay replacement (P338) which is not on the list now up the list please

P305 SRV 2019-20 Town Centre improvements – Why are Raymond Terrace and Nelson Bay only receiving \$375,000 in the first year compared to the rest?

P305; 309; SRV Town Centre Improvements Karuah – Why is Mustons Road culvert widening included within the Karuah town centre budget of \$500,000 & then a further \$1.5M in 2020-21? For transparency this should be within Pavement or Pathways listings and town centre budget listed correctly.

P305; 309 SRV Town Centre Improvements Lemon Tree Passage – How much community consultation has taken place on implementing McCann Park Improvements and should it not be located within a parks improvements budget, not a Town Centre one. What is the real cost of the town centre “improvement” and who has decided where the “town centre” is? \$500,000 one year and \$1.5M the next. “Fairness” principle at work while other more important projects miss out in other areas.

P305 SRV Town Centre Improvements Seaham – Should a bus stop interchange be listed as a Town Centre? \$500,000 – Excuse me!!!! Fairness gone mad. A lovely little “free for all spend” to benefit a handful of people compared to other areas!)

P306 SRV – 2020-21 Aquatic structures Little Beach boat ramp \$1.5M – This should be brought forward to 2019-20 as this is a highly used boat ramp that causes continual angst all year round and particularly so in summer.

P307 SRV Pathways – Shoal Bay Foreshore missing link \$2M – This should be brought forward to 2019-20 as this missing link is a highly dangerous section of a very busy through road all year round. Currently people have to cross back and forth across the road or else walk on a gap around 40cm wide on the very edge of the busy road. Extremely dangerous and should have higher priority than most projects on the SRV listing. Also listed on P327 for \$500,000 in 2025-26. What is that entry for?

P307 SRV – Pathways – Raymond Terrace – multiple missing links across suburb. (\$600,000) There should be a similar entry for the same amount..... to be “FAIR”!!!.... For links at Nelson Bay

P311 SRV 2021-22 – Aquatic Structures – Foreshore improvements Soldiers Point \$200,000. ...pathway west of Thou Walla. Where is the rest of the funding to undertake other foreshore restoration works on the opposite side of Soldiers Point foreshore where illegal works took place

yesterday. Should not this funding for Thou Walla be included within Holiday Parks listings and funded via Crown Trust funding?

P312 - 2021-22 Parks & Reserves – Conroy Park BBQ replacement (\$20,000) These were replaced last year. This should be a listing for Roy Wood Reserve, the most highly used reserve with 2 BBQs which spent last summer more times out of order than in order. Refer to GGM Facilities and Services

P313 - 2021-22 SRV 2021-22 Town Centre Improvements Fern Bay – Pathways for pedestrians..... \$1M. For transparency why is this in Town Centre and not Pathways and why does this have lower priority than Karuah, Seaham and Lemon Tree Town Centre entries (as above) This should be brought forward as Fern Bay is not seeing any benefit from SRV and a pathway like this would be highly used by the thousands of residents now moving into over 55 villages in that area. Give it the priority it deserves for safety of so many.

P316-317 2022-23 Pavement Assets SRV – All I see is a bountiful “wish list” of West and Central Ward roads to receive first seals. These should be prioritized against all other roads and pavement assets entries, including the hundreds listed on the Capital Works Plan Plus (Attachment 3) which have waited on the Never Never list for years. Only then can “fairness” be assessed.

P317 2022-23 Public Amenities – George Reserve Replacement \$140,000 – This should be moved to 2019-20 and completed with the work to be done at the reserve using a community partnership grant received by Rotary for new shelter & seats. Refer to GGM Facilities and Services.

P318 & P322 & P325– 2022-25 & SRV - Town Centre Improvements – Medowie \$500,000; \$2.25M; \$2.25M– Why not start 3 years earlier rather than Karuah, Seaham and Lemon Tree? This is one of the fastest growing areas in the Shire and yet funding for CBD improvements are being kicked down the road. Move it up!

P318 & P322 2022-225 SRV– Town Centre Improvements – Why is Anna Ba listed for \$250,000; \$1M; & \$750K and a start 3 years later than Karuah, Seaham and Lemon Tree? It needs a facelift sooner rather than later. Please be more transparent about the other Town Centre entries.

P319-320 SRV – 2023-24 Pavement Rehabilitation and Pavement Assets First Seal SRV See comments above on P316-317. Same comments as above. First Seal Boyd Oval carpark ((\$38,304) should be brought forward to entry above relating to Multi Purpose facility. (P304-305)

P324-325 SRV 2024-25 Pavement Assets – See comments above on P316-317 entry. Cross check and prioritise please.

P327-28 SRV 2025-26 Pavement Rehab and Pavement Assets entries – See comments above – Cross check and prioritise please.

P328 2025-26 Playground Assets Angophora Reserve Replacement (\$90,000) This should include the cost of replacing the shade cover which blew off 4 years ago and was never replaced by Council. Refer to GGM Facilities and Services

P328 2025-26 Sports Facilities – Sports Assets Shoal Bay Tennis Club Clubhouse upgrades (\$40,000) (Non SRV) Where are the other sports facility upgrades (see comment above) Refer to GGM Facilities & Services.

P330-331 SRV 2026-27 Pavement Assets and Pavement Reseals – See comments above. Cross check and prioritise please.

P329 SRV 2026-27 Community Building Assets – Birubi Point Tourist Information Centre/Interchange Anna Bay (\$3M) Why has this been kicked down the road when everyone knows that something needs to be done to provide for our tourists (and locals) at this highly popular spot. Recognise there have been grants but that won't be near enough (especially as this plan doesn't even solve the access and parking issues that much at all!)

P330-331 SRV Pavement Assets and First Seals – Same comments as above. However, the entry for first seal Bagnall Beach Reserve 3 Carpark Corlette (P331) (\$63,312) should be moved to 2019-20 as this is used by thousands of locals and tourists each week as it is adjacent the most popular dogs off leash area in the area. This carpark has to be reported for works and grading at least 2-3 times per year due to the potholes which form so quickly.

P332 & P335 SRV – 2026-29 Community Building Assets Arts Centre Development Raymond Terrace (\$500,000 & \$1.5M) This should be kicked right out of any SRV or future funding proposal. The Community Arts Centre at Nelson Bay (located within an old Army Hospital) has thousands of residents regularly use the facility plus they welcome visitors from everywhere. This is the facility that should receive funding, not one at Raymond Terrace. There is a great tourism opportunity to link this Arts Centre with the current walk through the Native Flora Gardens at Fly Point and to a potential Environmental Centre located within the Council owned building at Ngioka (currently let to a private NDIS provider who does not use the horticultural facility for their clients) Are there not already some vacant Council owned buildings in R/Terrace that could receive a revamp to provide a facility and what is wrong with the existing one as part of the Library? If this is again about "fairness", than this one really takes the cake as a joke. Why would we go to R/Terrace for "culture" when Newcastle and Maitland facilities are just so accessible? Total waste of money.

P333-334 SRV Pavement Assets & first seals – Same comments as above – Cross check and prioritise

P334 SRV 2027-28 First seal Bagnall Beach Reserve 2 carpark(\$97,632) and First seal Bagnall Beach Reserve 1 carpark (\$59,328) should be moved with the other mentioned above to **2019-20** as per comments above. This is the dogs off leash area and these carparks are highly used by residents and visitors.

P334 SRV 2027-28 First seal Laidler Walk Reserve Carpark (\$11,040) This should also be moved to 2019-20. It is a very popular free carpark for residents and visitors to use to park away from the Nelson Bay foreshore and walk down the steps to go on ferry trips and the like. Currently you could lose a mini minor in the potholes. It is also used as a turning circle for traffic coming from Magnus Street & the CBD and who want to turn around and go back to the CBD (searching for parking!)

P334 SRV 2027-28 First seal One Mile Beach Reserve 1 Carpark (\$112,896) This should also be moved to 2019-20. This is often the first impression that tourists have of one of the most popular surf beaches we have in the Shire and yet it mostly looks like "Dumpsville".

P334 SRV 2027-28 First seal – Little Beach Reserve 2 carpark Nelson Bay (\$63,168) This should also be moved to 2019-20. This services the playground area. It is located at the end of the walk around Fly Point. So important to improve this carpark plus the addition of safer signage for pedestrians who currently end their walk on a road which changes from one lane to 2 with no provision for pedestrians to move onto a verge. This sealing should be worked in with safer signage for pedestrians. It's a fatality just waiting to happen due to the popularity of the area all year round.

P334 2027-28 Playground Assets – Spelling correction from Georges Reserve to George Reserve and potential to move this up the list (\$150,000) This playground was replaced in the last few years and the main component – the pyramid climbing frame rusted out quickly. Due to only maintenance budget being available for replacement, there is now only a half size pyramid and a swing set. With major improvements planned by Rotary in 2019-20 to seating and amenities block replacement likely to move up the funding ladder, Why not do the whole job? – plan it properly, instead of piecemeal and include a proper playground. This is a highly used park by young families all year round. (Non SRV – Refer to GGM Facilities and Services asap!)

P334 2027-28 Public Amenities Fern Bay – Replacement – If this is the one along Nelson Bay Road, please move this up as it's not far off falling down (looks dreadful) but is also a most useful facility to have there and should be replaced immediately it falls down! (Non SRV – Refer to GM Facilities & Services asap) However, with such a low funding ratio for Fern Bay in the SRV – perhaps this should be in the SRV instead of some of the others?

P336 SRV Pavement Reconstruction & First seals – As per previous comments – Cross check and prioritise.

ADDITIONAL REQUESTS FOR CONSIDERATION IN FINAL DOCUMENT:

Maintenance of our Parks and Reserves:

This has barely received a mention in this proposal. The condition of most parks has gone down considerably over the last 10 years due to reduced service levels and stretching existing grounds staff to the limit. We have come to accept some sort of "new normal" for the condition of our parks, particularly those below Regional or District ranking. Parks staff do the best they can within the limited time/resources available. It's just not good enough to have foreshore reserves with 90% weeds and unwatered. (I repeat again about the Customer Satisfaction Survey results.... If people

got out of their cars and took a look at the "green", they might not give them such a high ranking as being OK!) More grounds staff are needed (and less Managers!)

Employment of Additional Officer for Volunteer Management – Parks/Landcare

Directly related to the previous point is a concern I have that there does not appear to be provision for additional staff to service the approved new arrangement for volunteers in our parks and Landcare groups. Already existing Parks staff are taking on added responsibilities at Ngioka and there is a limit to how much they can do. They are good staff and should not be lost.

Council needs to consider redirecting more budget to maintenance and less to community service type activities which are often duplicated at the State and Federal levels.

Similarly the W H & S section at Council is completely "over the top" and makes for itself and everyone else a huge amount of paperwork. This may be required to comply with Federal/State legislation. Council needs to seriously challenge these requirements at a higher level so that the waste can be redirected to providing basic services to ratepayers.

Additional Environmental Staff Positions:

The organizational structure of Port Stephens Council is deficient in not employing sufficient environmental staff with direct on ground involvement particularly with assisting volunteers. Compared to other sections of Council it is quite damning to see that there are only 2 management positions under the Environmental banner in the Council organizational chart of 2018. It is even more disappointing that these staff report to a different Group General Manager.



Corlette

20.12.18

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 1:39 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Fwd: revised IPR on exhibition and PSC2017-03014 submission

the revised document does not adequately address the issues raised previously

Towns on the Tilligerry are shabby and in urgent need of infrastructure repairs and in particular repairs to highly visible infrastructure that is disintegrating and falling down eg Park barriers in Cook parade LTP

This revised document has insufficient detail regarding proposed \$2 million spend on "Town centre" improvements to support the rate rise proposed

Prefer to see the maintenance backlog addressed rather than new spends on undefined improvements

ie FIX THE BROKEN STUFF FIRST !!

Cannot support a rate rise proposed for a poorly detailed proposal for new spends

Regards

[REDACTED]

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

[REDACTED]

To:
council@portstephens.nsw.gov.au
Sent:
Sun, 29 Apr 2018 20:18:37 +1000
Subject:
PSC2017-03014 submission

re PSC2017_03014 current draft Strategic Asset Management Plan doc and some issues affecting Lemon Tree Passage Township / Tilligerry Peninsula

1 LTP's infrastructure , roads, footpaths , kerbs and gutters, are aged and deteriorating and in urgent need of renewal

This SAMP document does not provide a coherent long term plan to deal with the issues of crumbling road surfaces, broken footpaths, missing footpath sections in CBD of LTP, broken Kerb and Gutters in the main streets

2 Park barriers in Henderson Park and adjoining carpark ,Kooindah Park and Rudd Reserve are falling apart and in need of renewal as are aged and out of date and leaning signs and posts along LTP's main streets

What is Council's Plan to repair and renew this aging and highly visible failing infrastructure in the main street of LTP?

3 What is the plan for the improvement required to LTP Rd to cater for the increasing number of cars trucks and boat trailers that are accessing the improved launching ramp facilities ?

4 What is the plan re Traffic management outside the shopping centre in LTP Rd ? There is an urgent need to calm and redesign the traffic flow and access to the shopping centre and individual commercial premises along this section of LTP rd, as well as provide for and separate traffic which is passing through and continuing on to Mallabula and LTP

5 Management of Bushland Reserves and in particular control of weed contamination and non indigenous species infestations needs to be adequately funded if our bushland is to retain its environmental and habitat value

A coherent long term plan is required for the renewal of infrastructure. plan for the future and for the management of Bushland reserves

Yours sincerely

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Resident and Ratepayer LTP.

Resident and Ratepayer LTP

[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
Friday, 21 December 2018 2:16 PM
SwitchPC
PSC 2017-01717-001

I object strongly to the lack of funding proposed to address foreshore erosion in Port Stephens. While Council obviously has plenty of information and detailed knowledge of the issues, Councillors and senior staff have ignored the need to do something about the issue.

A current indicator of the need is the unauthorised structure that has been placed on public land across the Wanda Beach frontages of 159, 161, 163 and 165 Soldiers Point Rd, Salamander Bay. While Council staff have responded quickly to information provided by the public, the vandalism is extensive. It may not have occurred if there had been a properly funded mitigation measure in the budget.

There is an urgent need for more environmental staff to ensure that the natural marine and terrestrial environment which makes this place so attractive is not further trashed by insensitive and unauthorised development.

More money is definitely not needed if all Council wants to do is carve up more parkland for parking as it proposes to do at Spencer Park in Soldiers Point. There is ample parking already for Spencer Park users. What is needed is the intestinal fortitude on the part of Councillors and senior staff to make Soldiers Point Marina comply with its consent conditions re parking.

I have not made any political donations.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 2:41 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Re: PSC 2017-01717-001 SUBMISSIONS DRAFT STRATEGIC ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2019-29

Attn: General Manager Port Stephens Council

The Community's proposal for an All Abilities Recreational Play Park at 6 Fishermans Bay Road and 7 Birubi Lane in Anna Bay, is aimed at enhancing and complementing the proposed new improvements for Robinson Reserve. This proposed All Abilities Recreational Play Park will complement and enhance the public assets Port Stephens Council is proposing for Anna Bay in the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan for 2019 to 2029.

The following projects have been awaiting funding, in some cases for several years, and should all be moved to the Special Rates Variation Capital Works listings. These projects will become the basis to stage the construction of the Anna Bay All Abilities Play Park.

- 1) Iris Moore Reserve development Anna Bay Scoping (\$150,000) (P290)
- 2) Iris Moore Reserve development – Anna Bay – Preliminary Works (\$3.7M) (P290)
- 3) Playground Assets Anna Bay Recreation/Birubi Lane Reserve (\$130,000) (P297)
- 4) Public Amenities Assets – Birubi Lane Reserve Installation (\$130,000) (P298)

The South Tomaree district is experiencing rapid growth and is in urgent need of the above four entries as set out in the Draft Strategic Asset Management Plan 2019-29 Attachment 3: Capital Works Plan Plus, which form the basis of the Anna Bay All Abilities Recreational Play Park.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]
Secretary
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 2:43 PM
To: SwitchPC
Subject: Submission - Draft IP&R documents PSC 2017-01717-001

To Port Stephens Council
Submission - Draft IP&R documents PSC 2017-01717-001
20 December 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comments. Initially I didn't intend to respond as I am supportive of enhancing our town centres nor am I entirely against the Special Rate Variation (SRV). However, when I saw what is included and missing in the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) document, I was very disappointed. If Council wants to increase our rates by 7.5% p.a, then I suggest these 3 relevant issues should be considered in the IP&R documents including the SRV:

1. Naturally there are items that target only certain sections of the community such as sports facilities - but there should also be essential basic services that **benefit every ratepayer** so that we can ALL feel we live in an inclusive cohesive community. There are regular services we still lack such as the issue of green waste collection, more frequent mowing of grass verges to reduce fire risk from cigarette butts and a variety of local events, markets and educational workshops reflecting our diverse interests.

I was glad to see the Workforce Plan as we desperately need a greater allocation of council support and resources, especially appropriate **staff**. For instance, **to support volunteers** and committees who undertake community activities including bushcare, local fire brigades, social work and other activities which benefit all ratepayers. We need to create more opportunities for people to get involved & take ownership of their local areas - not just through handing out grants but providing staff to help get residents get started and for practical as well as enthusiastic support. (The 'movers and shakers' in your recruitment process!) There also need to be more staff available to enforce local laws such as to reduce illegal tree removal which is commonplace.

2. As much as I agree that tourism is crucial to our local economy, I do NOT believe that ratepayers should be responsible for contributing towards improved facilities and major infrastructure especially where these benefit commercial operators. For example, whereby the proposed Birubi Information Centre will supply more space for dune operators. This should be funded through commercial operations.

Also, it's great that Council is creating a committee to plan more events but the major events should be sponsored by the business community or State government not by ratepayers. Yes the local economy needs a stimulus but you need to show how this will benefit each of us as ratepayers. Our attendance at such events will be support enough. **Financially supporting tourism** operators, facilities or major events doesn't benefit us directly and is **not the responsibility of local residents**.

3. Both tourists and the local community value the natural environment on the peninsula and it's what attracts people here. So why I am unable to find much in the IP&R that provides focus on the enhancement and protection of our beautiful natural environment? Is there funding for "Focus Area Three OUR ENVIRONMENT: Port Stephens' environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced"?

The document appears to be all about bricks and mortar infrastructure. There is a big focus on removal of 'dangerous' trees - but what are these going to be replaced with? I can only assume that there will be a well-funded ongoing program for planting of local native trees in parks, reserves and private gardens, and more

intensive control of weeds particularly bitou bush. The sand dunes draw the tourists in but Bitou Bush is destroying the coastline.

Following my submission on the Draft Weed Prioritisation Policy, I was told that the Regional Committee was currently dealing with higher priority weeds and that Bitou would be addressed where it impacted on key natural environments. There is little evidence of this having occurred to date. Please will you incorporate some additional funds to the IP&R to facilitate this and other environmental improvements?

Apex Park and Robinson Reserve received a million dollars grant - so why do ratepayers need to contribute again?

What happened to the Koala Corridor Enhancement Planting Project as outlined on the Council website?
What's happening with the Conservation Crew?

Take a look at Lake Macquarie Council's pro-active environmental programs:
<https://www.lakemac.com.au/environment>

Port Stephens environmental programs seem to be few and far between - yet they are important not just for aesthetic reasons but also for the tourist economy which Council so badly wants to encourage. After all, it is the natural beauty of our peninsula that draws people in. Eco-tourism opportunities could be further encouraged, not just water-based but land-based too. To keep our area attractive to tourists, we must limit further clearing of bushland even on private land, and introduce programs as outlined above.

I previously supplied comments to the Draft Community Engagement Policy, Community Strategic Plan and others but never heard back. If improving communication with us ratepayers is important to Council, then please allocate some resources to this in the IP&R. There are more than just physical improvements needed - your Workforce Plan states you need to have the right staff to support the IP&R and ensure deliverables are met. Only then we the community can expect things will happen and our views will be heard and respected.

I look forward to a response to my comments.


Boat Harbour

Members of the [REDACTED] have read the revised Draft IP&R on exhibition and some attended the information sessions conducted by Council for Central Ward at Medowie and the community session at Tanilba Bay.

This group submission repeats the points and echoes the comments already expressed in our group's recent submissions to Council, including the Integrated Planning & Reporting in April 2018, the Recreation Strategy in July 2018 and the Special Rate Variation in August 2018.

- The presentation given by Mayor Ryan Palmer at information sessions and answers provided by both the Mayor and senior Port Stephens Council staff, did not provide the necessary information or clarification to allow for informed comment on the revised IP&R projects costing \$2 million, proposed for Lemon Tree Passage.
- There is no detailed plan to address the historic backlog of infrastructure maintenance in Council parks. The process for planning the life cycle costs and funding the repair or replacement of an existing asset is clearly set out in Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan. Similarly, when a new asset is funded the cost and expected life span is reflected in future Capital Works lists, until it is either removed or replaced. If this policy and procedure was followed, no project would go on and off the list over decades and no project could "jump the queue".
- Terms such as "Town Centre", "main street vista" and "Improvements" are too general, vague, give no location, detail and therefore no opportunity for true community consultation and comment. Projects with no details and no costing should not be included in either Capital Works or Capital Works Plus. An informed decision on the priority and value for money to the local community, can't be established.
- The location of the "Town Centre" of the Special Rate Variation is not the logical and existing "town centre" of Lemon Tree Passage. It's where the shops, cafes, restaurants, Post Office, services and businesses are – radiating from the intersection of Meredith Avenue and Cook Parade and close to the waterfront. McCann Park is not even within the designated Neighbourhood Centre zoning of Council's current LEP.
- McCann Park has been a project that has gone on and off the list in Port Stephens Council's plans since \$30,000 was allocated for "McCann Park Amenities" in 2009. Nine years later, in 2018, \$30,000 was allocated to a "scoping plan".
- In the revised plans the project has changed to a \$2 million one-off cost is proposed for "McCann Park Improvements and to provide a sense of arrival from Lemon Tree Passage Road and John Street" 2019-2021. It has been pointed out to Council that John Street doesn't exist but the major concern with this project is that it is only a title. There has been no detail or explanation given of how McCann Park is going to be "improved".
- The recently released Port Stephens Council's study "Port Stephens Town Centres Upgrade Business Case Report" of 2018 by Morrison Low, also lacks vital details. Therefore, any conclusions on the 6.5 million dollar economic impact of the project, the maintenance costs, additional amenity, improved road safety and increased tourism expenditure, as stated in the Morrison Low Business Case report, are easily challenged. They are based on a vague, generalisation to "improve" McCann Park, but with no stated objectives or even an explanation of why McCann Park needs to be improved.

Our group's submission in summary - Until detail is provided, the community has not been consulted.

Yours sincerely
[REDACTED]

Submission to Revised Integrated Planning and Reporting documents
21st December 2018

- At Port Stephens Council's Local Information Sessions in early December, it was very clear that the Capital Works projects proposed demonstrated a lack of local knowledge and were very limited in detail. The choices of how to spend a rate rise in Central Ward are a serious breach of consultation guidelines and principles. This is especially apparent regarding the Special Rate Variation spending for Lemon Tree Passage - \$2 million dollars "McCann Park Improvements and to provide a sense of arrival from Lemon Tree Passage Road and John Street".
- It's obvious that this project wasn't really chosen by the community. Despite submissions pointing out basic mistakes in the previous documents, the repetition of errors of geography reflect a lack of basic local knowledge. Lemon Tree Passage Road is named Meredith Avenue at this location and it is presumed the Council reference to "John Street" should be "Johnson Street". Everyone in Lemon Tree Passage knows when you get to McCann Park you haven't "arrived in the Town Centre" yet, since the actual centre of town is 300 metres down the road.
- As a result of the Council's plans for spending in Central Ward, the feelings of Council's disconnect from the community has increased and the opportunity to choose projects which would have really made a difference has been lost.
- Locals have *not* been asking to "Improve McCann Park". They have been calling on Council to implement the 2016 Pathways Plan and to fix local main roads such as Lemon Tree Passage Road/Meredith Avenue.
- I suggest a project with a catchy title such as "Connecting Tilligerry" would cover a lot of gaps in the current maintenance backlog. The broken local roads, footpaths, creek banks and boardwalks could be fixed. Add a "Town Centre" tidy up and the appearance of the place is much improved. Include a "Foreshore Trail" with a shared pathway linking the three "towns" of Malabulla, Tanilba Bay and Lemon Tree Passage along the foreshore, exercise stations, water refill stations.....

The project now becomes a major attraction for tourists and community events as well as a possible government grant matching funds project.

- As long ago as 2007, Lemon Tree Passage locals were asked to write on large pieces of white paper what their vision was for their community. "What did they want Lemon Tree Passage to look like in 30 years?" There were some really good and even visionary ideas written down on that night. It's a shame Port Stephens Council didn't repeat the process in 2018.
- The community has been told that Council has heard their call for improved facilities and the answer in Central Ward included "McCann Park Improvements".

I maintain that the Tilligerry community didn't ask for this and call on Council to provide evidence of any public consultation on this particular project.

Yours sincerely,




SUBMISSION RE PROPOSED SPECIAL RATE VARIATON

The Special Rate Variation projects and planning documents have been extensively examined and discussed at a number of meetings of the [REDACTED]

50% of our local population is over 55 years of age. Their financial planning has already been done for their retirement leaving many with little scope to accommodate such large changes in Council rates (or increased rent associated with the rate-rise being passed on). We have encouraged our members to make individual submissions to Council on the unaffordability of the Rate Increase.

Should the rate increase be approved our members are keen to see an equitable spread of projects across the entire LGA. Local residents also need to see a fair return on their investment.

We do not believe that the current plan achieves a fair return on investment for residents of Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove.

Council needs to recognise that they are raising considerable revenue from the gated communities of Palm Lake, The Cove and Bayway, whilst not having to maintain the recreational facilities, roads and streetscapes at these locations.

Likewise the private Seaside Estate, sees the Strata (not Council) footing the bill for maintenance and improvements to the various recreational facilities and open-space located within the Seaside development. At the same time, these facilities are available for use by non-residents, and are effectively boosting the Council's recreational assets whilst not having to pay for them.

Port Stephens Council owns less than 1 Hectare of parks and reserves in the Fern Bay planning district, which is considerably lower than the rest of the LGA. Less to maintain = lower maintenance costs.

So if residents of Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove have to pay higher Council rates, where is that return of investment going to occur?

We welcome the inclusion of the following items in the plan and wish to express our support for these upgrades.

- Pavement reconstruction for Rankin and Vardon Roads between Nelson Bay Road and Popplewell Road,
- Pavement reconstruction for Popplewell Road between Vardon and Braid Roads,
- Widening including kerb and guttering and drainage to Taylor Road between Nelson Bay Road and Popplewell Road.

Each of these items will be crucial in preserving the amenity and safety of this section of Fern Bay when construction commences of the DHA development at the old Rifle Range.

We also welcome the inclusion of the Pavement Rehabilitation of Fullerton Cove Road.

We would like to take this opportunity of identifying a number of errors in the documentation so that they can be rectified.

Capital Works Plan Plus

- p313 refers to Town Centre Improvements for Fern Bay. There is *no Market Street* in Fern Bay. The error is repeated on page 350. Which cross street does the plan refer to? This is very significant for our members. Town centre connectivity is required from Bayway Village to Vardon Road AND beyond to Braid Road.
- Are these pathways 'footpaths' or the wider 'shared-user bicycle paths'. As detailed below one of the main priorities of our members is a shared-user off-road bicycle path running the entirety of Nelson Bay Road between Bayway Village and Stockton Cemetery which is south of Braid Road.
- If the planned 'pathways' are shared user paths, why are they not listed with the other cycleways that are planned for other areas in the LGA?

Draft SAMP 2019-2029

- p178 - Population data from 2012 is being used, despite the existence of census data from 2016. The Fern Bay planning district has undergone a transformation in the past ten years, and using out-dated population data is simply misleading. In 2012 the population was 2652 but by 2016 it was at 3329. With further lots being released at the Seaside Estate, Palm Lake and The Cove, the population is likely to exceed 3700 by 2020. The Council should be using the most up-to-date population data that is available to ensure that its plans are accurate and reflect reality.

So what are the additional infrastructure items that our members believe should be in the Special Rate Variation Project portfolio?

Construct an off road shared user path between Bayway Village and Stockton Cemetery

Considerations

- There is an existing shared user path from Seaside Boulevard to Bayway Village and from Stockton Cemetery to Stockton Ferry Wharf.
- Nelson Bay Road is subject to a 70km/hr speed limit, and cars parked between Vardon Road and Taylor Road associated primarily with the take-away shop and residences make on-road riding dangerous to all but the most experienced rider. An off-road shared user path along this section would resolve these issues. (Newcastle City Council recently constructed a similar off-road shared user path adjacent to Donald Street Hamilton between Samdon and Swan Streets which passes a variety of businesses and residences.)
- Vardon and Popperwell Roads are also subject to constant and increasing levels of passing, turning and parking cars associated with Fern Bay Public School, the Community Centre and the proposed Defence Housing Development at the Fern Bay Rifle Range. On-road cycling via these streets would not be a suitable alternative.

Construct footpath on western side of Nelson Bay Road between Palm Lakes entrance and 1077 Nelson Bay Road AND between 1033 Nelson Bay Road and Vardon Road intersection

Considerations

- The Palm Lake development lacks any footpaths connecting it to the wider suburb.
- Crossing Nelson Bay Road on foot, motorised scooter or bicycle is currently considered a major safety issue by residents of Palm Lake and Bayway Village, most of whom are over 55 and less able to run across the road between gaps in the passing traffic.
- Crossing Nelson Bay Road to access the bus stop, school and shop is a safety issue for residents of numbers 1031 to 1077.
- Installing both sections of footpath would allow all residents safer options for crossing Nelson Bay Road given the likely installation of traffic lights on Vardon Road x Nelson Bay Road as a consequence of the Defence Housing development.

Install a bus shelter and seat at Seaside Boulevard x Ironbark Drive

This needs to be provided as a matter of priority. This bus stop has been operational for over 10 years since 2007 and still does not have any shelter. Surely Council has received enough rate payments and section 94 developer contributions from this Estate to provide a bus shelter and seat, particularly given the dozens of school students and parents who use the bus stop at various times during the morning and afternoon. A provision of a bus shelter and seat would also assist in encouraging more residents to take public transport.

Replace the bus shelter on Nelson Bay Road outside the golf course

This run down brick shelter needs replacing, particularly as it restricts visibility for pedestrian, child-bike riders and scooter drivers travelling along the footpath. This bus shelter blocks the footpath and the surrounding sandy soil has the potential to bog a scooter, or give a child the wobbles whilst riding their bike and trying to negotiate the tight path around the shelter.



Install a bus shelter and seat on Nelson Bay Road outside Palm Lake

This bus stop requires a seat and a shelter. The residents of Palm Lake are all over 50, so they have a greater need for a seat to sit on whilst waiting for a bus, than someone who is younger and fitter. Likewise a shelter would provide additional amenity and encourage more residents to use the bus to head north to Medowie, Raymond Terrace or Nelson Bay, where they are more likely to spend their money supporting the local economy.



Install a more weather proof bus shelter on Nelson Bay Road outside Bayway

We appreciate that Council has recently replaced the bus shelter at this location and raised the concrete platform so the bus shelter does not flood in heavy rain. However the bus shelter design is poor with the gap between the back glass and roof, and only shallow panelling on the sides. Residents at Bayway frequently report getting drenched whilst waiting for the bus. Council needs to appreciate that Bayway is a low socio-economic demographic where there is a higher reliance on bus transport than the average, and have little capacity to cope with the Special Rate Variation being passed onto them through higher rents. A more-rain proof shelter is high on the list of priorities for Bayway residents. As the attached photo shows, the shelter now features an additional plastic chair which appeared soon after the shelter was upgraded, with the chair being used to provide additional seating space, at what is a very popular bus stop.



Demolish and re-build the public toilet opposite Fern Bay Shop

In recent months the public amenities have been permanently closed opposite the Fern Bay shop. Whilst on paper, there may appear to be alternative options nearby, these public toilets have been extremely well patronised and are a valuable asset for travellers through Fern Bay. Heavy vehicle drivers stop at this location on a daily basis, as it provides easy egress off Nelson Bay Road and the opportunity of getting food at the take-away shop. Since the toilets have closed, some of these truck drivers have been seen trying to be discrete in urinating behind the closed amenities, or beside their trucks. Visitors to Port Stephens do not need to see this, particularly so close to the new 'Welcome to Port Stephens' sign.

Easily accessible and obvious toilets are also a priority for families travelling on holidays, particularly those with small children who give little warning of their need to go. With Port Stephens being such a popular holiday spot, it makes sense to provide a roadside toilet block to ensure families can stop 'for a quick pee' without delaying their arrival at their destination.

We would like to see Port Stephens Council re-consider their decision, and instead of demolition in the medium term and no replacement, see that these toilets are demolished and replaced as soon as possible, particularly given their use by tourists to Port Stephens Council.

Construct a river-side interpretative boardwalk north of the Stockton Bridge

The RAMSAR wetlands under the Stockton Bridge are an underutilised tourist attraction that would benefit from the provision of a river-side boardwalk that extends into the Port Stephens Council

area on the western side of Nelson Bay Road. Such an idea was contained in the original Section 94 planning documents for Fern Bay. A boardwalk with interpretative signs would provide an additional passive recreational facility for residents of Fern Bay.

Replace damaged or removed street trees, particularly in the Seaside Development

Street trees are a valuable resource that provides shade, visually pleasant streetscapes and valuable habitat for local wildlife. Newcastle City Council recognises the value of their street trees by having dedicated staff and a policy of managing street tree plantings in new developments by leveeing the developer. This contrasts with Port Stephens Council who rely on developers installing the street trees themselves. The Seaside development is a case-in-point showcasing the poor results that are achieved - most street trees that were not damaged during house construction or removed by their owners during their driveway installation have not thrived. Given that Seaside residents pay Strata fees to maintain their local parks and reserves, there is scope for Port Stephens Council to use Council rates from Seaside to provide replacement street trees in this location.

The Strategic Planners at Port Stephens Council have also been working on the long overdue Strategic Plan / Land Use Strategy for Fern Bay (and North Stockton). It would be a shame if Council ignored their hard work by not incorporating their hard work into the planning documents as part of the Special Rate Variation.

We appreciate the opportunity of being able to make a submission in relation to the Special Rate Variation and look forward to Council considering the items of infrastructure raised in this submission.

We would also like to remind Council that Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove has been a significant source of developer contributions in the past, with less than half the money raised being spent in our local area. Many of the projects listed above could easily be paid for using existing developer contributions held by the Council. Those that cannot be funded using developer contributions *should* be capable of being funded by Council as the 'return on investment' for Fern Bay and Fullerton Cove residents.

If you would like to discuss any of these items further we can be contacted on email at [REDACTED] We would also like to extend a welcome to our meetings which are held on the first Monday of every Month at 7:30pm at Fern Bay Community Centre.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Chairperson

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 21 December 2018 1:16 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Medowie SRV meeting

Hi [REDACTED]
 My submission as follows

1. While I and many understand that money needs to be raised to enable improvements in the Council area, the amount is too high and needs to be reconsidered to 5.5% maximum.
2. Those whom have no means of balancing such an increase through wage increases need to be considered. While hardship allowance may help the very low income people, others fall between this point and those more capable of recovering the rate increase. Council needs to be conscious of the many increases people are dealing with already such as power charges. I submit that people without the ability to compensate over time the rate increase have a level of rebate or similar. These include those on pensions, self funded retirees and those on very low wages.
3. Non critical projects need to be reprioritised to either be excluded, or longer term timing. These would include projects that are not directly related to OHS including safe walkways, public amenities and safer road 8ntersections and the like. For example, it is difficult for most I talk to, including Raymond Terrace residents, why King Street is a major priority with items like walkways on the levee, all totalling about 13M. While arts and culture centres are important, again most peo0le see these as longer term "nice to have" and not a priority in the main.
4. Further focus needs to be given and reported on fund raising through developers' contributions to community infrastructure, and Council cost improvement initiatives.

Thanks

On 7 Dec 2018, 11:57 +1100 [REDACTED] wrote:

Thanks [REDACTED] No I'll put together a submission and send in

On Fri, 7 Dec 2018 at 09:34, [REDACTED]

Dear

Thanks for this . Do you want me to log it as a submission? I am away until Tuesday and will then seek responses if they have not already been supplied. Regards [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On 7 Dec 2018, at 8:40 am, [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Ryan

I attended the Medowie SRV consultation last night. Well done to you and the councillors/ council staff on a difficult subject that always attracts some hostile elements. Thought some of the crowd, most of whom I didn't recognise were not there to listen and destructive which was disappointing. I had some questions/ comments but was getting picked up by my son so had to leave.

Few thoughts for what they're worth. I managed large manufacturing sites for over 30 years of my career so I do appreciate how difficult "bad news" (despite the benefits) meetings can be.

I think you did a good job running the session, Few points to consider:

- don't let people interrupt - stick with your intent of questions after
- one question only per person at a time
- never invite any person to come out the front and run the meeting - once saw that happen, luckily not to me. Really difficult to back off from that
- just keep asking people to keep quiet because most people came to listen to the presentation

Again, understand how difficult it is to remain calm when interesting people are mouthing off. Hope these help.

Regards my questions, that might help

1. I'm with the group that can see some rate increase is necessary to improve the communities, but 7.5% seems difficult (I'm a self funded retiree - wouldn't qualify for hardship allowances but we don't get pay rises or the like so we can't make up on the increased cost of living)

The meeting presented the council had a majority to have 7.5% increase and was submitted, and here was the list of projects and timings. At the end we could have our say/ raise further submissions - my question is what exactly can we debate?

- Would council change their position on 7.5%?
- Would they change major projects?
- Is timing and priority something that can be moved?

I think it needs to be very clear on what the meeting is about and what is still up for debate and consultation

2. How does the Council manage submissions - do councillors read each one or simply a summary of key issues? How do we have reasonable questions answered if not included to Council from the submission?

3. The CBD items listed have a strong bias to King street, Raymond Terrace and then Nelson Bay. As a Medowie resident good to see \$5M for us but well under \$13M and \$10M respectively for towns that seem comparatively well developed. When you look at King Street for example, we see footpaths, walkways on the levee included. We don't have footpaths to major schools in our township/ we don't have any main street. Of course smaller towns in Central ward can argue they also need help. Why the larger amounts in what seem like the 2 well developed towns?

thanks for coming out to Medowie

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Submissions for Mayor/Councillors only

EXTRA ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING: 29 JANUARY 2019
ITEM NUMBER: 01
REPORT TITLE: REVISED INTEGRATED PLANNING
AND REPORTING DOCUMENTS AND
DEBT RECOVERY AND HARDSHIP
POLICY

PRIVACY LEGISLATION

Submissions received by Council contain personal information as defined under the *Privacy & Personal Information Protection Act 1998*. Any submission/s received by Council are only to be released (release includes, but not limited to, physical hardcopy, viewing and/or reproduction) in accordance with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, by authorised Council officers.

You are reminded of your obligations as a Council official, and as such the Mayor and Councillors do not have the authority to release any submissions without firstly consulting with the Governance Manager at Council.

Should you have any questions about submissions, please contact the Governance Manager.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 11 December 2018 8:32 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: RE: HPE CM: Port Stephens Council - Proposed Rates Assistance Program - PSC2009-02488-505

[REDACTED]
Response below..

My Kindest Regards,

[REDACTED]
Manager - Member Services

St Vincent de Paul Society | [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Important Disclaimers and Warning:

The contents of this email and its attachments are confidential and intended solely for the original recipients to whom they are addressed. This message expresses the views of the author and not necessarily the St Vincent de Paul Society State Council of NSW. If you are not the intended recipient please delete without copying or forwarding and inform the sender that you received it in error - Thank you.

[REDACTED] *acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land upon which we work. This acknowledgement and respect extends to all Elders past and present, and all Aboriginal people.*

Please consider the environment before printing this email

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 10 December 2018 3:35 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: HPE CM: Port Stephens Council - Proposed Rates Assistance Program - PSC2009-02488-505

[REDACTED]

Just checking in with you as to whether you have any questions at this time about the proposed Rates Assistance Program?
If you could give me a couple of quick indications please, by return email by Friday, that would be much appreciated:

Would Vinnes be interested in participating in the Rates Assistance Program, if it proceeds?

Answer: Yes we are happy to participate

Do you have an estimate of the number of home owners that might come to you seeking financial assistance each year?

Answer: This is variable but with the rate increase it could be up to 200.

Do you think a \$5,000 global budget would be appropriate?

Answer: Yes it a reasonable base figure.

Thanks for your consideration.

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions,
[REDACTED]

WISHING YOU A
merry christmas



From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 22 November 2018 11:09 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: HPE CM: Port Stephens Council - Proposed Rates Assistance Program - PSC2009-02488-505

Thank you for your time on the phone today and for your information about St Vincent De Paul's role in our community. Council (PSC) is proposing to increase rates substantially under a Special Rate Variation (SRV) starting in July next year. One of the things PSC is considering is introducing a Rates Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to ratepayers under substantial financial hardship. The way it is envisaged the Rates Assistance Program might work is through PSC delegating to some welfare/counselling organisations the power to recommend that PSC provide financial assistance of up to a certain amount, eg \$250, for ratepayers that you have assessed as being a priority need for rate relief. PSC understands that the proposed Rates Assistance Program might fit in with your financial relief programs.

PSC doesn't want to place many parameters or restrictions around the process, but there would be a few:

Targeted at Non-pensioners

Ratepayers who are pensioners with a pensioner concession card will be receiving a pensioner rate concession and lower waste removal charges under the proposed SRV, so PSC is targeting the Rates Assistance Program at non-pensioners. As a result, the welfare provider might choose to clarify with the client whether they already receive a pensioner rate concession on their rates, before mentioning that the Rates Assistance Program is potentially available. Counsellors would need to contact PSC, so that PSC can confirm that the client is a ratepayer and is not already in receipt of a pensioner rate concession, or has already received financial assistance this year.

Individual Assistance Limit

Rates are levied annually and payable quarterly. Assistance might be offered quarterly as a limit of \$62.50 or annually as \$250. PSC would leave this discretion up to the welfare agency.

Global Funding Limit

PSC would set a total limit of funding available for the financial year. If the funding limit was reached before financial year end then no further assistance could be provided.

Potential Process

PSC envisages the process might work as follows:

Ratepayer becomes aware of Rates Assistance Program (via Council staff, Council rates brochures, websites, financial counsellor referral)

Agency assesses client as appropriate for financial assistance and enquires whether they are a non-pensioner, or received rates financial assistance already this year

Agency contacts Council's Revenue Team via phone or email (Ph 4988 0393 or rates@portstephens.nsw.gov.au) to clarify: ratepayer name | address | non-pensioner | has rates owing | not already received assistance

Agency sends instruction in writing (ie email) confirming client/ratepayer is eligible for financial assistance of \$x

PSC processes credit to ratepayers rate assessment and lets agency know.

PSC does not envisage there be any requirement for evidence of repayment efforts by the client.

Agreement

PSC envisages formalisation via a letter of agreement.

Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy Review

Council currently has its revised debt recovery and hardship policy on public exhibition, until 12 December 2018. The primary purpose of this revision is to include the Rates Assistance Program. Vinnies is welcome, and encouraged, to make a written submission, particularly in relation to the Rates Assistance Program and the anticipated amounts of global funding that realistically might be required to be made available by Council in your experience.

I have provided a link to the policy review on Council's website below.

<http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/about-council/public-exhibition/exhibitions-2018/draft-debt-recovery-and-hardship-policy>

Alternatively if you have any thoughts, you can email them back to me and I can accept these as a submission.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on anything, please phone or email me.

Thanks,



www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au



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[REDACTED]

From:
Sent:
To:
Cc:
Subject:

[REDACTED]
Wednesday, 12 December 2018 10:55 AM

[REDACTED]
RE: Port Stephens Council - Proposed Rates Assistance Program -
PSC2009-02488-505

H [REDACTED]

Thank you for the clarification and information you provided on the phone yesterday.

Samaritans Emergency Relief would be pleased to partner with you in this program. Although as discussed it's difficult to determine at this stage what the take-up rate may be it certainly will be a welcome addition to the range of supports we are able to offer through our Emergency Relief Centres. At this stage it is envisaged that the people we support will access the Rates Assistance Program after assessment by our Intensive Support Workers and/or Financial Counsellor to ensure appropriate administration of the program.

I look forward to hearing from you once details are finalised.

Regards

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Co-ordinator, Emergency Relief
Samaritans Foundation
(Monday – Thursday)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the Elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of Aboriginal Australia.

[REDACTED] is committed to the environment so think **green** before you print this screen.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 10 December 2018 3:16 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Port Stephens Council - Proposed Rates Assistance Program - PSC2009-02488-505

H [REDACTED]

Thank you for your time on the phone today and for your information about Samaritan's role and the role of volunteers versus staff and the financial counsellor. Council (PSC) is proposing to increase rates substantially under a Special Rate Variation (SRV) starting in July next year. One of the things PSC is considering is introducing a Rates Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to ratepayers under substantial financial hardship. The way it is envisaged the Rates Assistance Program might work is through PSC delegating to some welfare/counselling

organisations the power to recommend that PSC provide financial assistance of up to a certain amount, eg \$250, for ratepayers that you have assessed as being a priority need for rate relief. PSC understands that the proposed Rates Assistance Program might fit in with your financial relief programs.

PSC doesn't want to place many parameters or restrictions around the process, but there would be a few:

Targeted at Non-pensioners

Ratepayers who are pensioners with a pensioner concession card will be receiving a pensioner rate concession and lower waste removal charges under the proposed SRV, so PSC is targeting the Rates Assistance Program at non-pensioners. As a result, the welfare provider might choose to clarify with the client whether they already receive a pensioner rate concession on their rates, before mentioning that the Rates Assistance Program is potentially available. Counsellors would need to contact PSC, so that PSC can confirm that the client is a ratepayer and is not already in receipt of a pensioner rate concession, or has already received financial assistance this year.

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<http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/about-council/public-exhibition/exhibitions-2018/draft-debt-recovery-and-hardship-policy>

Alternatively if you have any thoughts, you can email them back to me and I can accept these as a submission.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on anything, please phone or email me.

Thanks,



p 02 4988 [REDACTED] w portstephens.nsw.gov.au



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[REDACTED]

From:

Sent:

[REDACTED]
Thursday, 20 December 2018 11:22 AM

To:

Subject:

[REDACTED]
Response to Rates Assistance Program

Attachments:

copier@financialcou.org.au_20181220_104805.pdf

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached Financial Counselling Hunter Valley Project Inc response to Port Stephens Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy changes.

I apologise for the delay in our response, but I only returned from leave today. I hope our response is not too late as I believe we have recommended some positive suggestions for changes to the Rates Assistance Program.

We are asking if we could meet some time in the New Year after 18th January 2019 when all be returned from leave. We would like to discuss these suggestions and help make Port Stephens Council the leader in assistance for those rate payers experiencing financial hardship.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas and please have a great New Year.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]
Manager/Financial Counsellor [REDACTED]

Financial Counselling Hunter Valley Project Inc
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]





FINANCIAL COUNSELLING HUNTER VALLEY PROJECT Inc



20th December 2018

Dear Mr [REDACTED]

Financial Counselling Hunter Valley Project (FCHVP) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on Port Stephens Council's Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy as well as proposed Rates Assistance Program. FCHVP is well placed to contribute to the review due to our extensive casework experience in assisting vulnerable people in financial hardship and advocating for them.

For many years, our financial counsellors have played an integral role in the determination and assessment of financial hardship in both the consumer credit and utilities sector. Financial counsellors also play an important financial education function. Many vulnerable people have difficulty prioritising their debt repayments in multi-creditors situations. Through education, our counsellors help vulnerable people to more appropriately allocate their scarce resources to highest priority debts. Council rates are considered a high priority debt.

The forgoing response is consistent with the November 2018 *Office of Local Government Debt Management and Hardship Guidelines* (the guidelines). We note that as the guidelines are published under the *Local Government Act*, PSC must take them into account when developing and implementing debt management and hardship policies.

Debt Recovery and Hardship Policy

| REF | ACTION | COMMENT |
|-----|--|--|
| 1.1 | Insert <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Fair and equitable treatment of people in hardship"• "To comply with the Local Government Debt Management and Hardship Guidelines" | |
| 3.1 | Delete <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Genuine" from financial hardship. | According to the guidelines, hardship is defined as "difficulty in paying debts when repayment is due". The use of "genuine" places an unacceptable threshold criteria on hardship eligibility and is contrary to the preceding principle of "treating people fairly". Attempts to make moralistic judgments of the genuine or otherwise nature of a person's objective inability to pay debts when repayment is due is irrelevant and inappropriate and tends to erode the efficiency and effectiveness of debt recovery. |

| | | |
|---------|--|---|
| 5.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Rate payers can elect to receive a rate reminder notice by email, in addition to the written notice." | <p>The use of e-communication can improve rates recovery for people who don't live at the rateable property and may not receive or remember the written notice.</p> |
| 5.1.2.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Contact details for local support services if the rate payer is having financial difficulty | |
| 5.1.3 | <p>Delete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 days <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "21 days" <p>After "with no repayment arrangement in place" insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "or request for financial hardship, or contact from a support service on the client's behalf" | <p>14 days is insufficient for a person in hardship to make a booking with a financial counsellor</p> |
| 5.1.4 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Contact details for local support services if the rate payer is having financial difficulty <p>Delete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "within seven days" <p>Replace with 28 days</p> | <p>In our experience, most people who fail to pay their rates have multiple other creditors and will be receiving many letters of demand. Overtime, people in hardship can develop chronic mail and creditor avoidance. We believe referring client's to support services can improve rate collection by helping vulnerable people to budget and advocate for waivers for unsecured debts or debts in breach of responsible lending.</p> <p>This intervention can improve liquidity and encourage people to attempt to pay priority debts, like rates and charges. Having an advocate to negotiate repayment arrangements can relieve significant stress and anxiety for people being harassed by creditors and in-turn result in better rate recovery by council.</p> <p>Early referral to and intervention from support services may also save council significant professional services fees from fruitless engagement of debt</p> |

| | | |
|---------|---|--|
| | | <p>collectors or solicitors to recover debts from people in hardship with little capacity to pay.</p> <p>7 days to arrange finance in response to letter of demand is grossly insufficient, especially given typical 3 day EFT transaction period.</p> <p>Failure to pay after only 7 days will be a high likelihood for many people receiving the demand letter – unnecessary legal action may be triggered by this inappropriately short payment period.</p> |
| 5.1.4.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Council will only commence legal action as a last resort” <p>Delete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nine” <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “21” | <p>Under the guidelines, councils should take legal action as a last resort, not as a matter of practice. Legal action should only occur if an informal payment arrangement is not successful, a ratepayer breaches an existing arrangement or has a long history of not paying rates and charges.</p> |
| 5.1.5.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A ratepayer can contact council to enter into payment arrangement at any time and not only for overdue rates” • “A ratepayer can elect to pay their rates periodically using Centrepay” • “Interest will be suspended for hardship repayment arrangements and waived if the arrangement is completed” <p>Delete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The overdue amount must be paid within 12 months” • “Where legal action has commenced.....instalment order.” | <p>We find that many people can better afford to make small repayments over time. This bill smoothing avoids cash flow problems when suddenly hit with a large bill and savings may be insufficient.</p> <p>The use of Centrepay can improve rate recovery as it assists clients who lack budgeting skills, financial discipline or who suffer from addiction as the rates are paid directly from their Centrelink income.</p> |
| 5.2.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The hardship provisions apply to Sundry debtor accounts.” | |
| 5.2.6.2 | see 5.1.4.1 above | |
| 5.2.7.1 | See 5.1.5.1 above | |

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 5.4 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hardship is difficulty in paying debts when repayment is due • Hardship can be both short and long term • Any person who cannot pay their rates or charges due to hardship can apply to council for assistance at any time • Short term hardship can arise from temporary changes in circumstances such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loss or change in income - Illness - Loss from an accident - Natural disaster or emergency - Death in family - Separation or divorce - Family violence • Long term hardship can arise from any of the reasons above or another reason where the hardship is not likely to resolve in the short term. • Council will consider any recommendation by a support service that a person is in hardship. <p><u>Hardship Principles</u></p> <p>Council undertakes to uphold the following principles when dealing with ratepayers in hardship:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair, equitable and respectful treatment of ratepayers in hardship • ‘stop the clock approach’ to suspend debt recovery, interest, legal action while hardship assistance is being considered or while a hardship arrangement is being complied with. • Informal action first to promote timely payments • Minimise costs – try to achieve payment without increasing ratepayer in hardship’s debts • Flexibility – provide payment options and processes that assist those in hardship • To assist ratepayers by encouraging early referral to local support services” <p><u>Access to Hardship Relief</u></p> | |
|-----|--|--|

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rate payer can apply for hardship assistance by direct contact with council, verbally or in writing; or • By completing a hardship application form; or • Through a support agency who contacts council on the ratepayer's behalf | |
| 5.4.A | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Where a ratepayer applies for hardship assistance, council will work with the ratepayer (and support service if acting) to access hardship relief including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic payment and repayment plans - Deferment of rates and charges - Discounts for prompt payment in full - Writing off accrued interest - Relief due to revaluation - Rates Assistance Program - Pensioner concessions - Extension of pensioner concession to avoid hardship - Abandonment of rates and charges • The hardship applicant will be informed of council's decision to grant hardship within 14 days of receiving the application. • If the application is declined, council will provide reasons for declining hardship in the outcome notification as above. | |
| 5.4.11.1 | <p>Insert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial hardship means difficulty in paying debts when repayment is due | |

Apart from the changes and suggestions above, FCHVP strongly recommend that PSC:

- Publishes a plain English, easy to understand version of this policy
- Makes the easy and the full version readily available on the rates section of council website
- Sends a rates assistance/hardship flier as an insert with rates notice
- Includes contact details for local support agencies on the rates notice and reminder notices
- Include contact details for the National Debt Helpline

Yours Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Manager/Financial Counsellor [Redacted]
Financial Counselling Hunter Valley Project Inc

[Redacted Address]