

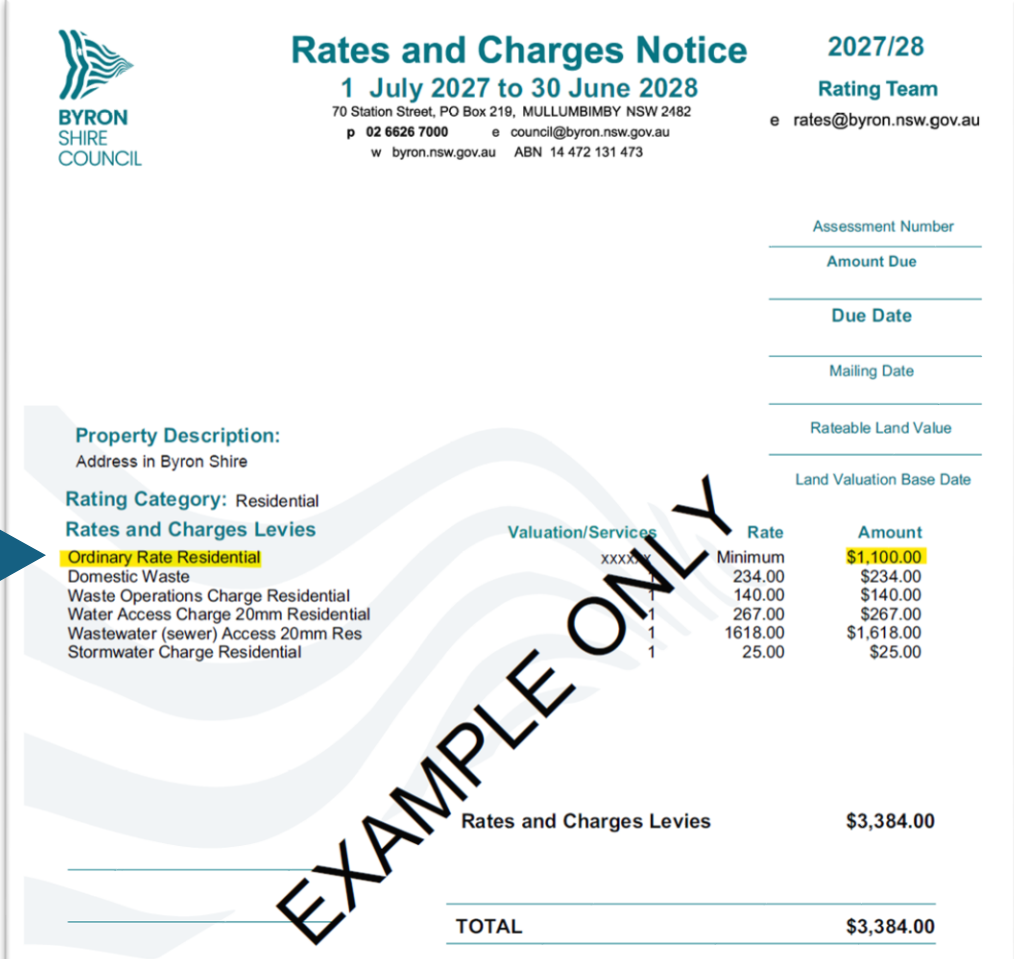
Frequently Asked Questions about the proposed Special Rate Variation

Impact on Rates

Does the proposed SRV only affect my ordinary rates?

Yes, this proposed increase will not apply to your water, wastewater, stormwater and waste collection charges. Refer image below.

The SRV only applies to **ordinary land rates**, and does not apply to other charges on the rates notice



Byron Shire Council

Rates and Charges Notice

1 July 2027 to 30 June 2028

70 Station Street, PO Box 219, MULLUMBIMBY NSW 2482
 p 02 6626 7000 e council@byron.nsw.gov.au
 w byron.nsw.gov.au ABN 14 472 131 473

2027/28
Rating Team
 e rates@byron.nsw.gov.au

Assessment Number	Amount Due	Due Date	Mailing Date	Rateable Land Value	Land Valuation Base Date

Property Description:
 Address in Byron Shire

Rating Category: Residential

Rates and Charges Levies

Valuation/Services	Rate	Amount
Ordinary Rate Residential	xxxxxx	\$1,100.00
Domestic Waste	234.00	\$234.00
Waste Operations Charge Residential	140.00	\$140.00
Water Access Charge 20mm Residential	267.00	\$267.00
Wastewater (sewer) Access 20mm Res	1618.00	\$1,618.00
Stormwater Charge Residential	25.00	\$25.00
Rates and Charges Levies		\$3,384.00
TOTAL		\$3,384.00

EXAMPLE ONLY

Does the proposed SRV apply to all rating categories – Residential, Business and Farmland?

Yes, it does. The proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) would apply to all rating categories, including Residential, Business and Farmland properties.

Actual impacts of the proposed SRV will vary depending on land values and property categories, however the proposal uses Council's existing rating structure, ensuring changes are applied consistently across property types. Based on **average ordinary land rates**, the table below outlines the indicative price path under the current rating structure.

Average Rate	2026/27	2027/28	Year 1 increase	2028/29	Year 2 increase	2029/30	Year 3 increase
Residential	\$1,762	\$1,973	\$211	\$2,171	\$197	\$2,379	\$208
Business	\$3,558	\$3,985	\$427	\$4,383	\$398	\$4,804	\$421
Business - BB CBD	\$8,256	\$9,246	\$990	\$10,171	\$925	\$11,147	\$976
Farmland	\$3,168	\$3,548	\$380	\$3,903	\$355	\$4,278	\$375

Does an increase in land values mean Council can collect more revenue?

An increase in land valuations does not result in any additional general income for councils.

The total income that Council can source from land rates is capped at the approved rate pegged amount or the SRV variation.

It simply means it changes the way rates are distributed within each rate category/subcategory. Some people will pay more rates, some less, some the same.

To read more about how land values affect council rates in NSW see [Why land is valued and what it's used for | NSW Government](#)

About the Special Rate Variation

What is a Special Rate Variation?

A Special Rate Variation (SRV) is an increase to general rates beyond the standard cap set by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Councils apply for an SRV when their existing revenue is not enough to support services and maintain infrastructure.

What is a rate peg?

Rates increase each year in line with a limit set by the NSW State Government, known as the rate peg.

The rate peg is determined annually by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) and sets the maximum percentage increase in the total general income that Council can collect from rates across its entire rate base.

What is the proposed Special Rate Variation increase?

The proposal is for an SRV over three years:

- **2027/28:** 12.0% (8.0% SRV + 4.0% rate peg)
- **2028/29:** 10.0% (7.5% SRV + 2.5% rate peg)
- **2029/30:** 9.6% (7.1% SRV + 2.5% rate peg)

Because the increases are cumulative, this would result in a total rise of about 35.03% in ordinary rates over three years.

This would be a permanent increase to your ordinary rates and at the end of the SRV period (2030) the revised total rates would then increase by the usual annual 'rate peg' percentage.

The increase would apply only to the ordinary rates component and would not affect water, wastewater, waste collection or stormwater charges.

What will happen if Council does not continue with the SRV?

Where additional funding is not secured, council may be required to reduce or cease services and defer infrastructure maintenance to manage operating deficits. Infrastructure will continue to decline.

We will need to review our current services and assets and make some tough decisions.

Didn't Council already get a rate rise a few years ago?

Yes. Council received approval for an SRV from 2017/18 to 2020/21, which increased general rate income by 7.5% each year for the four years.

During that process, Council considered 3 options and following community consultation and feedback, resolved to proceed with a lower level of rate increase than was required. The option adopted by Council was still forecast to result in a "deteriorating" infrastructure and assets.

Since then, Council has continued to experience increasing costs associated with infrastructure renewal, construction, asset maintenance, population growth, visitor impacts, and natural disasters.

Refer to the *Fact Sheet – SRV 2017/18 income and expenditure to date*

Capacity to Pay

What if I cannot afford to pay my rates?

If you're experiencing financial hardship, you can apply to Council for support. We look at each request individually and can offer tailored payment plans (weekly, fortnightly or monthly).

To find out more read Council's *Debt Management and Financial Hardship Assistance Policy* available on [Council's website](#).

What support is there for pensioners?

If you hold a Pensioner Concession Card or Department of Veterans Affairs Card you may be eligible for a rebate on your general rates, as well as your water, wastewater, stormwater and waste collection charges.

To qualify, the property must be your principal place of residence, and you must be the owner, part-owner or life tenant. To apply for a rebate, or find out more information, [visit Council's website](#).

Financial Sustainability

What is financial sustainability?

The long-term capacity of an organisation to manage financial resources, meet current obligations, and fund future goals without depleting capital or compromising future generations.

It involves balancing revenue and expenses to ensure continuous operation and resilience against risks.

What else is council doing to improve its financial sustainability?

If Council proceeds with an SRV application, it will be required to demonstrate to IPART the productivity improvements and cost containment measures it has implemented.

Council has developed an Organisational Improvement Program that is underpinned by seven key focus areas:

The Organisation Improvement Plan is underpinned by seven key focus areas:



People, Structure, and Governance: Review of organisational structure, realignment of roles, and strengthening a culture of accountability.



Technology: Exploring digital transformation opportunities and assessing enterprise systems for upgrades or improvements.



Assets: Evaluating asset uses and implementing actions from the Strategic Asset Management Plan. This may include divesting or rationalising assets and reviewing maintenance and capital works programs.



Strategic Planning: Strengthening long-term planning for capital and operational programs, enabling better decision-making and financial modelling.



Service Delivery: Undertaking the service review framework, and carrying out an assessment of current service levels, and alignment with community needs.



Finance: Reviewing income streams such as developer contributions, grants, fees and charges. Reviewing expenditure through procurement enhancement and cost containment opportunities to improve fiscal management.



Business Processes: Analysing core business processes and identify opportunities to streamline operations.

For further information on what Council is doing to improve our financial sustainability, refer to the *Fact Sheet – Council's Financial Sustainability Work*.

Why doesn't council tax tourists?

Councils in NSW have limited options for charging visitors to fund local services. Council cannot introduce a general tourist tax or visitor levy. These taxes can only be established by the NSW or Australian Government.

Council already recovers some costs from visitors through fees and charges, including parking fees, holiday park revenue, and other user charges. However, these revenue sources are not sufficient to meet the full cost of maintaining roads, public amenities, parks, beaches, waste services, and other infrastructure used by both residents and visitors.

Recently Council has resolved to support an independent researcher to study both the positive and negative impacts of large visitor numbers and this effect on Council and ratepayers.

This body of work will support Council in advocating for appropriate legislative reforms and funding, particularly with the approaching 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Southeast Queensland.

How does Byron compare with other councils?

Comparing councils can be complex because each council has different responsibilities, populations, visitor numbers, infrastructure networks, and funding sources.

The Office of Local Government publishes council performance and financial information through the **Your Council NSW** website. The site allows you to compare Byron Shire with other councils across a range of measures, including:

- Financial performance
- Infrastructure and asset management
- Revenue sources
- Service delivery
- Population and demographic information
- Benchmarking against similar councils

Byron Shire faces some unique challenges, including a relatively small number of rateable properties supporting infrastructure and services used by a large visitor population, along with lower levels of untied government funding than some neighbouring councils.

For independent council comparison data, visit:

Your Council NSW

<https://www.yourcouncil.nsw.gov.au>

We have put some of the data together in the *Fact Sheet – How does Byron Shire compare with other councils?*