

Community Submissions

Submission 1

I am writing in response to your letter dated 6 May 2021, ref: OLEr-9359621.

I would like to express my objection to the proposed Differential Rate changes to be levied on my property (address supplied).

Differential rates were proposed in 2019, and rejected by Council.

At that time, the justification given for introducing differential rates was that it is more expensive to provide services to unimproved land than developed properties.

The current proposal states that 'The purpose of which is to encourage development'.

Could I ask why the justification for Differential Rates is now different than when it was proposed in 2019?

Given the global pandemic and economic uncertainty, it seems ill advised to me to be proposing such a massive rate increase to a section of ratepayers.

I believe that in these difficult times, the best way forward would be to share the load equitably, rather than targeting a small section of the community with a disproportionate rate increase.

I would love the opportunity to discuss the proposed changes with you and have my questions answered.

I would also like to request the opportunity to state my case to the Council.

(names supplied)

Submission 2

I would like to voice my objection to the Proposed differential rates 2021/22.

I have subdivided my block and although I haven't developed it yet, my financial circumstances haven't allowed me to as had been planned. The block is a rear strata.

I object to the proposal as I am already paying council rates and water rates this is a cost burden that is already difficult. An extra cost of approx. \$600 to the about \$2000 already being paid is not going to hasten development but may impede it further. I do want to develop the block when I am financially able to but \$600 isn't going to force me to sell, nor should I be forced to.

The block doesn't cost the town anything except for mailing out rates bills and a ranger inspect the property once a year. Bassendean is basically getting 2 lots of rates for what was once a single block with no extra usage of roads or any of the services the town provides.

Community Submissions

I feel that this is just an easy way to raise more money whilst giving the impression that your keeping rate increases low by targeting a small percentage of rate payers with a whopping 50% increase. Perhaps the Town of Bassendean should control its spending especially in these times of low inflation and very low wages growth.

(name supplied)

Submission 3

I am opposed to the proposed differential rate for vacant land mainly due to the financial burden it would place me in.

This is more of a plea to take into consideration normal families living their lives and trying to make ends meet. My blocks were given to me by my family and I want to keep them in our family for future generations as well as potentially build my own home. We have benefitted greatly from having our family close by and I want to be able to pass this on to our future generation.

I don't know why those who have vacant blocks are being currently targeted and maybe there is some political agenda going on, hence my letter to you to please consider those of us who just want to keep our land in the family and for no other reason than to help our future generations.

I'm not a big business owner – I just work as an employee and with the covid issues going on also have to live with the fact that at some point may also lose my job as that has happened with others at work, hence would be very difficult to pay higher rates.

I've estimated that I would have to pay an extra \$500 per year for each block. I think you can understand the stress that would put on me to have to find an extra \$1,000 per year to keep these blocks that I want to help my family with.

Not to mention the other household utilities that continually go up, putting financial pressure on those of us who don't have a huge income coming into the household.

I'm hoping the above will be taken into consideration as this has caused some anxiety for myself, especially in these challenging times, as I was impacted by the Covid issues.

Hoping that normal families trying to make ends meet will be safe to not have this issue hanging over their heads and hoping that at least the fee structure will be scaled for larger businesses compared to 'normal families' just living their lives.....

(Name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 4

I am writing to you as I am opposed to the proposed differential rates.

Please see below my concerns with this proposal:

1. It will NOT meet its objective to “encourage development”.

We have been fortunate to have our land for a number of years and now have the intention to develop our land in the near future. We are however frustrated at the thought of being financially penalised in the lead up to this. Our land rates are not and will not be the motivating factor as to when we develop our land - for us and many others a combination of; personal finances, life stage, working circumstances and family considerations will guide this important decision.

Is there any evidence that suggests applying a financial penalty to vacant landowners will actually “encourage land development”?

Has council considered options to incentivise the development of vacant land? This way those who are motivated solely by financial reasons to develop will be more receptive to bring forward their time line, while not creating financial burden for those who will not be influenced by either a financial penalty or incentive.

2. Financial pressure and Covid implications

Simply, this proposal places excessive financial pressure on the individual land owners who may also be locals in our community (or hope to be one day).

Especially, as this proposal will not encourage the desired land development the financial strain will be felt longer term for many.

Consideration should also be given to the poor timing of this proposal, as the impact of the pandemic is still being realised. For example in the past 12 months, our house hold has experienced both redundancy and have suffered losses due to lockdowns on our local business.

What additional value adding services are our council intending to offer vacant land owners to justify the additional rates, should the proposed rate increase be applied?

Love the idea of “growth and vibrancy” - just cannot see this proposal achieving this outcome.

Please feel free to contact me if you wish to discuss our position further.

(name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 5

Thank you for the opportunity to put forward my views regarding the proposed changes to council rates. I am vehemently opposed to the introduction of a differential rates levy system for vacant land. The following gives a brief outline of my reasons for opposing this: -

1. From what I understand and have been able to discern through research, there exists no proof that introduction of the differential rates on vacant land will result in the councils desired outcome.

2. Its generally a well understood ideal that providing a “carrot” rather than a “big stick” approach to achieve an outcome results in greater success. Rather than financially penalising vacant landowners who aren’t developing, why don’t you incentivise them to do so instead?

Should you have any queries on the above or require further information then please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

I look forward to your positive reply.

(name supplied)

Submission 6

I am opposed to the proposed differential rate for vacant residential land.

Reasons include:

1. I believe the increased rate in the dollar will not achieve the intended objective, it will simply increase the financial strain on households.
2. Penalising vacant land owners financially won’t make them develop quicker – it will simply take more money away from their overall income which will in turn delay development further i.e. money which could be put towards developing the land will instead need to be used to pay the increased rates. This is counterproductive.
3. Owners have purchased land in the Town for many different reasons e.g. as an investment for their children to allow them the opportunity to develop the land when the time is right etc. They should not be penalised for having decided to invest in Bassendean.
4. Just because the land has not been developed, doesn’t mean it is underutilised e.g. land may be used for purposes such as vegetable gardens etc. These have great community and environmental benefits.
5. In a time where many households have been impacted by COVID-19, the increased rate in the dollar will have a large impact on many families (potentially 211 in total). Particularly those households who rely on small business income and have been impacted the most by the State Government imposed “lockdowns”.

Community Submissions

If council proceeds with differential rates for vacant land, should they also look to impose a differential rate to other properties e.g. those who have decided to build a single dwelling on large parcels of land. Under Draft Local Planning Strategy and Local Planning Scheme No. 11, some of these single dwellings will be zoned R25, R40 and as far as R100. Should they also be penalised if they don't develop their land to its full potential.

Why not look to provide incentive to develop rather than penalise.

(name supplied)

Submission 7

There are several points which are at odds with the proposal to have separate, double rates for vacant land in Bassendean. Not only are the objects and reasons provided not in line with the situation of most vacant land in Bassendean (addressed below) but also it will have a detrimental effect on the council priority of higher density housing, restricting future council rate income.

With the down turn in housing there are many waiting to build but cannot because of the lower values, thus not being able to start subdividing and building. Adding an extra annual cost will prevent subdividing and building pushing infilling construction even further into the future.

If there is a higher cost in council rates on having vacant land, demolition of old derelict houses will be deferred thus the suburb will be spotted with eye saw derelict housing where a clean block would be aesthetically better.

Delays in subdivisions of current blocks would occur because a single large block will be cheaper to hold on to rather than the subdividing of rear blocks in preparation for infilling housing.

As for the points outlined in the proposal letter, the 2% increase is over the CPI and council spending on activities and plans should be reduced rather than moving the expense to the landowners, who already pay more than other councils require. As for the premium on vacant land, 50% is just outrageous. It is a big stick to (as you say) to develop land where every developer knows an incentive is much more of a motivator.

The amount of monies recouped from vacant land will be minimal and cause less development as people will move to other councils who are more amenable to subdivisions. From your own figures only 2.9% of the properties will be affected, thus giving a few landowners a much greater burden for a small amount of monies gained.

Community Submissions

I hope that sense is seen that the double charging of rates for vacant land is a retrograde and inhibiting decision and will result in a reduction of infilling houses with a consequence of loss in rates for the council. It should not be passed and implemented in the Town of Bassendean.

(name supplied)

Submission 8

My position

Let me begin by being very clear:

I object in the strongest possible terms to the proposal to increase the rates for vacant land by implementing differentiated rates as outlined in the letter titled the same and dated 6 th May 2021.

If the Town of Bassendean ever wanted to alienate its residents, measures like this will do it. Sadly, for all the good people on Council and those who work for the Town of Bassendean, this proposal loses you credibility and support. Any Councillor voting for such a change will not only lose voter support from myself, my extended family and neighbours, and I dare say those others affected, but we will actively campaign against them in all future elections.

My rationale

The proposed rate difference between 12.7342 and 8.4895 is 4.2447 in the dollar. You are proposing slugging owners of undeveloped land not just 5% or 10% but a whopping 50% extra; how is that fair? Sounds like blackmail and intimidation tactics to me.

Imposing this change on 2.9% of rateable properties (your figure) will not make a significant difference to the income for the Council but will have a BIG impact on those who own the land. A more significant impact on your revenue is the huge rise in land value several years ago and as we are experiencing now.

In 2021 you claim, within the correspondence threatening increasing rates on vacant land, that there are:

- 7,124 (97.1%) 'improved' properties
- 211 (2.9%) 'vacant' properties.
- 7,335 total properties (by calculation)

Community Submissions

Yet according to correspondence received from the Town of Bassendean 2nd July 2009 there were:

- 6,500 total properties
- 100 'vacant' lots (calculated 1.5%)
- 6,400 'improved' properties (by calculation)

Are you able to explain these figures?

If these figures are correct (and they came from you) then the Town of Bassendean has, over this period,:

- not only enjoyed the benefits of huge increases in individual property values and consequently higher rates but
- gained an extra 624 rateable properties.

I can only reason that this increase has been caused by the Town of Bassendean increasing its borders, developing multi-apartment dwellings or existing blocks being subdivided – in any case, this has been a great windfall for the Town of Bassendean's revenue-raising.

I further suggest that your proposed measures are counter-productive. I know of at least one couple who are striving to save enough money to build on their land. Your rate hike is just going to make this harder.

If the Council is serious about encouraging development, then I suggest bullying and creating a financial burden is not the way to do it. Rather, why not offer incentives such a reduction in rates for a few years after developing the land.

The proposal to raise rates for vacant land was tried unsuccessfully by the Town of Bassendean back in 2019 and so it would seem that rather accept its defeat, the Council has simply chosen to wait and try again; this time using a different rationale. Many of the claims made by the Council in 2019 were discredited.

Logically, if differentiated rates were introduced, it should be the reverse of what is proposed; halving not doubling the rate in the dollar used to calculate the rates for vacant land. Contrary to previous claims, vacant land obviously requires less expenditure by the Town Council than developed land. At present, vacant land does not incur many of the costs imposed by the Council for the owners; any services required for vacant land are not commensurate with the rate increases proposed.

Historical Context

Community Submissions

Approximately a decade ago, there was a massive increase in the values of property in Perth and we became one of the most expensive cities in Australia; some rates doubled in one year. This meant a huge increase in revenue received by local governments as the rate was and is based on the land's value. This happened without the local councils needing to provide more services. When I asked in 2009 to give rate relief by reducing all the rates or implementing differential rates lower for vacant land, the Town of Bassendean responded by saying that rates were calculated on the GRV by the adopted rate in the dollar and had no control over it. This was untrue; the Council chose to maintain the formula used when it could have adopted a different model or reduced the rate applied. To this day, Local Governments have maintained and increased this level of rates and not provided any relief.

It is very relevant that in the Town of Bassendean's written response to me dated 2 July 2009, it states, "In the case of Bassendean, as explained on the telephone, of the 6,500 properties there are 100 vacant lots and it would be difficult to establish a reason why there should be a differential rate for vacant land as opposed to other land in the district."

The Town of Bassendean refused to implement a differential rate for vacant land then, saying it would be "difficult to establish a reason to do so" but is seeking to do so now in order to raise rates. There seems to be no difficulty now in creating differential rates – were we lied to then or is it happening now? There seems to be an alarming inconsistency and disappointing pattern displayed by the Town of Bassendean; to take as much money as it can from its rate payers. The Town of Bassendean said then it couldn't apply differential rates to allow for a decrease in rates but yet now the Town of Bassendean is saying it can apply differential rates because you want to RAISE the rates. The hypocrisy is not lost here.

Specific Context

While what I have written above applies generally, there is a special context that applies to my family. I am fortunate to have married into a family that has lived here in Bassendean since the 1950s; we now have five generations living in Bassendean.

Some years ago, the Town of Bassendean forced my family to subdivide their land, part of which they had used as a market garden, at their expense. Like many of their generation, they sacrificed and worked long and hard to build a future for their children here in Bassendean. Without consultation, payment or any compensation, the Town of Bassendean also took:

- a huge portion of the family's land to form a park and roadway; again, developed at my family's expense.
- land to make a walk-way, the main purpose today which seems to be to provide easy access and escape for burglars and other undesirables.

Community Submissions

• part of a subdivided block of land to re-align a street. All this land was taken without payment nor any compensation. We are not land banking nor wealthy land developers. And now to add insult to injury, the Town of Bassendean wishes to extract more money for what land remains for our children to build on when they are ready.

Implied consequence I assume that if implemented, the Town of Bassendean will be taking financial responsibility and providing 150% the full services for owners of vacant land as the do for developed land, including but not limited to:

- providing tip passes and full rubbish services.
- clearing the firebreaks required by the Bushfires Act 1954 – 1987.
- clearing any dumped rubbish.
- maintaining the property if it becomes overgrown or unkempt.

Conclusion and new Motions

In the fullness of time, vacant land will be developed, as we see it happening now, and more rates will be paid; in the meantime, the Town of Bassendean enjoys the rates imposed on this land with little outlay.

The proposed implementation of differential rates, as a way of demanding higher rates is without credible justification and is an injustice - I vehemently oppose it.

Alternatively, I propose the following motions:

(1) That in order to encourage the improvement of 'vacant land', the rates applicable to 'vacant land' which is developed within the next seven years to then to be classified as 'improved land' be reduced by 50% for the three years following Council approval to commence development of said land.

(2) That differential rates be applied to 'vacant land' at a rate of 75% commensurate to 'improved land'.

I would be happy to speak to my submission if requested.

(name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 9

Please find below our objection to the proposed increase in rates for vacant lands in consideration by the Town of Bassendean.

Despite the reason for higher differential general rate for vacant lands being the encouragement of development, please note that landowners of vacant lands use the least amount of works, services and facilities provided by the Town. This does not justify vacant landowners being levied a rate 1.5 times higher than local residents for unused services/facilities, which is essentially what the rates go towards.

It is unjust to apply a penalty of higher rates simply because landowners have not developed their properties as yet.

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to comment on this matter. I hope you hear us.

(names supplied)

Submission 10

Objections to any Differential Rating which negatively impacts this owner's property:

1. Lot x has only been acquired from the Town of Bassendean in the last few months and already the Town of Bassendean is imposing a 50% higher council rate on that land.
2. Lot x was in fact contaminated at the time that the Town of Bassendean sold it to the owner. Contaminated land has many difficulties and restrictions as to development; which restrictions are in fact imposed by the Town of Bassendean itself. This land may need to remain undeveloped indefinitely due to restrictions that may be imposed by the Town of Bassendean which make the lot difficult or not viable to develop.
3. The Town of Bassendean has contributed to significant delays due to objections in changes of zoning layout and structure to our application for development on both Lots x and Lot x. These delays have prevented the owners from developing the site to date.
4. Lots x & x are located on a very steep piece of land which is not easy or cost effective to develop and it is certainly possibly that some area of the land may have to remain vacant indefinitely regardless of whether the rest of the site is developed or not.

Community Submissions

General Objection to the amount of the differential rating:

1. The differential rate in the dollar for vacant land is proposed at 50% more than for improved land. This is not fair or reasonable or necessary in order to encourage development.
2. Development can be encouraged without unfairly prejudicing some rate payers above others simply by the Town of Bassendean improving their Development Application process and having an open mind as to how the community as a whole can benefit from a diversity of retail, commercial and residential developments rather than prioritising an agenda for higher density target-meeting.

We ask that you present this submission to Council for consideration at the Ordinary Council Meeting on Tuesday 22nd June 2021.

If you have any queries or if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

(name supplied)

Submission 11

I have been asked to provide comment on the proposed differential rates in the Town of Bassendean. I myself am a very pro-development person and usually would support a measure such as this. However, I feel that now is not the right time to be proposing these changes for the following reasons.

1. Perth has just experienced an extended period of no growth in home prices and extremely high rental vacancy rates over the past 5+ years. These two combined together means there really was no appetite to develop spare lots in the town.
2. Covid and the subsequent homebuilder bonuses has now forced house prices up and made price unobtainable for many especially when you consider the huge delays and potential for sub-par building standards to be happening due to the rush.

Personally, this has affected my family's ability to build on our vacant land. We have a development approval in place, however had to cancel the building contract as the prices were not affordable for us anymore.

I believe there should be either a moratorium for this change, possibly plan to bring in those differential rates in the 23/24 financial year which would hopefully allow the building block to clear and prices to normalize again. You could also look to only set these rates for owners who are showing no intent to build. I.E while a development approval is still in effect on that property then no increased rates should be applied.

Community Submissions

Submission 12

I write this in response to the letter recently received detailing the proposed increase in rates to vacant land. To keep this brief I will get straight into our response;

We are against this proposal.

We brought a property in this council in 2012 as an investment to hopefully create some wealth for my young family, but also in a manner in which I thought may play a small part in adding to and being part. As the years tick along I am starting to regret that decision.

We brought a property with an extremely dilapidated house on it. After years of waiting to see if subdivision requirements may become somewhat more aligned with other councils in Perth and allow for battle axe blocks or other options, over the past 12 months we have pursued the only option available to us in developing this block, 2 very long very skinny lots. This was never my preference and one I am unsure of how it makes the suburb a visually appealing place. However having now invested heavily in the only option available, we are trying to sell these lots and early into the process the results have thus far been disappointing.

Now with this letter I am to find even more money may be extracted from us from this council. Through our own risk and effort I have attempted to make a small improvement to the area and again it is now going to cost us even more. We are a regular working family with 2 kids. This was the first major investment of our lives and receiving this letter feels really disheartening.

Given time and the ability to save money wherever possible and not be expected to always pay more, we hope the work we started may continue to improve the area.

(name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 13

We are writing in regards to the letter addressed to me (name supplied) of (address supplied), Your Rates 2021/22.

We strongly object to the proposed Differential Rating on vacant land.

We feel it is unfair to increase the rates. As it is vacant land and no benefit is being obtained from it the increase in rates in the present climate we are living in due to Covid-19 would put undue hardship on payment of the rates.

(name supplied)

Submission 14

We are in receipt of your correspondence, referenced OLET-9374121, and respond as follows.

We object to the levying of increased rates against our property for the reason that we are doing everything possible to develop the property.

It was not until after purchasing the property in January 2021, and carrying out extensive surveys and investigation, that we learned the property would require a new sewage connection in order to develop the property.

We are well advanced in this process and hope to begin the civil works within the next few weeks.

We are having to fund the installation of the new sewage connection ourselves as neither the Town of Bassendean nor Water Corporation will fund or subsidise the works. This was evidenced in the attached correspondence from the Minister for Water, and the MP for Bassendean, the Hon. Dave Kelly.

The neighbouring properties on both sides have a permanent sewage connection, yet these sewage connections were allowed to be installed without allowing for a permanent connection to our property. This is a significant oversight by both the Water Corporation and the Town of Bassendean.

For the Town of Bassendean to now try and levy increased rates for its own oversight is unjust.

Please confirm that the rates levied on our property will be the lower (Improved) rate in the dollar of 8.4895.

(name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 15

I write in relation to the proposed rates increase for 2021/22.

I understand the town's objects and reasons for the differential rates proposed but I am opposing the rates increase due to several reasons:

1. With Covid restrictions and lockdowns, it has affected our financial positions significantly.
2. As it is vacant land, we incur minimal costs to council bins/sewer services etc..
3. As it is vacant land, there is no extra income that comes from this to support the higher proposed rates.

I would urge the council to reconsider this and not to introduce the proposed rate rise for the vacant land.

(name supplied)

Submission 16

Please note my strong objection to the proposed differential rates.

While I own an undeveloped block (address supplied) the rate change would not affect me personally (or at least not for long), as I am in the process of applying for development approval.

My objection is based on the fact that this change will disadvantage people holding land as an investment, and speed up unpleasant development. Much of the charm of Bassendean is to do with it being relatively spacious with good tree cover, much of this is thanks to undeveloped land.

It is already outrageous that Water Corp charges \$480 a year for water to travel past a block with no tap on it. To be slugged by an additional whack of rates is a disincentive that could lead to ad hoc development.

All the best with your deliberations.

(name supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 17

As owners of (address supplied) we object to the increase in council rates, we have been waiting since October, 2020 for a decision on purchasing the rear right of way. To which we have been informed by (a Town of Bassendean officer) the process will still take until at least December 2021 before we will be notified of an outcome. We then have to apply for a design application & building approval which could take us until mid-2022.

If the Town of Bassendean had notified us that an increase to rates was still to proceed, we could have looked into building a dwelling & not bother with the right of way which would mean additional expense to the Town of Bassendean to maintain the right of way, which the Town has not done since we have owned (addresses supplied).

Please find our objection to the increase in rates from July 2019.

(name supplied)

Submission 18

I am writing in regards to the above.

Our property is in the Shire of Bassendean (address supplied).

My husband and I are Senior Citizens and would find it extremely hard to afford such an increase.

The reason we are not building at this stage is because of the instability of the building Industry.

We are waiting for a more positive financial climate (due to Covid etc.) it is not a good time to undertake developing our block.

We wish this to be taken into consideration when the decision is being made at the Council meeting.

In times like these we feel it is very unreasonable to be charged 12.7342 in the dollar extra and would put us under extra pressure and stress.

We would appreciate your consideration in this regard when making your decision.

(names supplied)

Community Submissions

Submission 19

“You have to be Joking” Same Joke but a little earlier this year

You can be assured that whatever a town/council does is never in the interest of rate payers.

As to the reasons why you want to do distribute rates more equitably - there are no additional costs of services for these properties. Whilst inconsiderate neighbours do dump Waste on the properties I can assure you the council does not clean it up and in fact given these properties do not get green waste or bulk waste collection it is the owners who get to clean it up and remove rubbish and if it doesn't happen the council will like everything else issue some sort of notice to remove it.

In fact everything you note in relation to the increased costs on these properties is just rubbish to try and justify the grab for more money to waste on other things.

It could be argued given that no one lives on the blocks that they are actually helping ie less traffic less wear and tear on the road providing more access to available on street parking etc etc. Less use of library and other facilities in the are providing more use by other rate payers.

If the overall management and running of the town/council was carried out more effectively you could actually reduce rates.

Example your roadside bulk collections when people who do dump rubbish on the verge don't forget the vacant blocks don't have rubbish to dump and cannot avail themselves to this service anyway where there is stuff left out that doesn't meet the criteria ie glass, lounge suites instead of the bulk collection picking it up its left out, and on a couple of occasions relating to glass table tops left out on the verge calls to the council come up with the usual dribble of “they shouldn't be left out” after a Efficient management and common-sense is worth more than rules and regulations and bullshit.

The vacant block which is only about 100meters from Bayswater council if it was in Bayswater would be worth \$50-100,000 more and have better development potential. There was glimmer of hope when there was discussion to amalgamate Bassendean into Bayswater.

The one time the council did actually start to get proactive with rate payers and set up a group of ratepayers to advise on development in the town it lasted about 3 months till you pulled the rug on it the last thing you wanted was any actual input from ratepayers. Then this year you are back again wanting input from rate payers developing the main street of Bassendean interesting one thing is to put the railway footpath bridge over Guildford road the common sense thing to do and the suggestion I made at these meetings probably 5-7 years ago pre the current thing being built – how many hours of peoples time have you wasted having to stop at the lights, how many litres of carbon monoxide have you produced leaving cars idling

Community Submissions

stationary etc about the only thing you were lucky in not having done is no pedestrians got killed.

By seeking submissions you know you are being unfair and doing the wrong thing!

If in fact you planning people provided better service and advice and were more proactive this block probably would have been developed a few years back.

(name supplied)

Submission 20.

Thank you for your council letter dated 06 May 2021 which I received on 13 May 2021 re the proposed council rate changes for 2021/22.

I have included 12 key points and a summary of objections and this is the third such objection letter that I will have now sent to council and my position is unchanged in respect of the following.

1. Community & Personal Discrimination.

This decision discriminates against me as a rate payer by assuming that my assets and any income to be generated from that investment is less worthy than others in the community.

2. Change of Percentage Rate.

Especially when we currently pay the same 5-6% as anyone else but
now you want to increase ours to be 12.7342%.

3. Use of Amenities & Infrastructure used by Vacant Land

Council says they need to change the Rating system due to the extra cost of administering the towns cost in respect of Amenities and Infrastructure.

Yet as a Vacant Block no services are currently used by me the part owner in the up keep of my property for the past 27 years.

Not withstanding that Council has just saved a lot due to occurrence of the Covid-19 Pandemic which has seen council not hold the annual new year fireworks on Ashfield oval.

4. Green Waste Pick up for Vacant Land.

I pay rates yet I can not get a Green Waste pick up because council refuse to offer me the same service as I get on my own home.

Instead they afford me 4 Free Tip passes to Redhill Refuse but I still have to pay to either have a skip bin collect that green waste or pay my own petrol to get it there.

5. Developing Strata or Subdivision Restrictions.

Town of Bassendean

Proposed Differential Rates, advertised on 6 May 2021

Community Submissions

My understanding regarding some of the other 211 vacant lots of land in the district have the real Benefit of Upgrading their vacant land by means of sub division or strata title.

Or developing and selling their properties without any building restriction in respect of style they want to build.

Yet I have been restricted for 27 years to develop my vacant block to its full potential.

Where you and council have been previously contacted by me every day for the past 4 years in respect of impediments to development by Council, DFES, DWER re the Flood Plain.

Yet I and you both know else where in Perth building and subdivision near the River has been welcomed by other local councils and WA Planning.

With the reduced land acreage from 5000 sqm down to 491 sqm

Including the development of 4- 6 storey high rise apartments in these other precincts and in the Town of Bassendean opposite the Bassendean Square Shopping Centre.

So its one set of rules for Real Estate Developers at the high end of town but not the locals that live within the Town.

And to say to me as a rate payer that Council wants to introduce Differential Ratings to benefit the community to stimulate growth & development & improve the vibrancy of the Town.

When they do not own my land but they expect me to take a fall for the community.

To sell at an extreme loss, when the only benefit to the Town is that they can only build one home not four on my vacant land.

As I am restricted by not being able to either strata title or sub divide my property to either benefit myself or that so called community you are so verily concern end about.

By bringing about my poverty while not even resolving to assist new home buyers or the homeless by freeing up more vacant lots of over half an acre to development.

How much financial waste has occurred due to council and planners not balancing land for sale to benefit everyone equally in the community including the homeless.

6. DWER, DFES & Council Red Tape versus State Administration Tribunal.

Council, DWER & DFES have effectively gagged me with Red Tape in being able to develop my property which is afforded everyone else.

And even when our neighbour at (address supplied) spent a fortune fighting council and WA Planning went to State Administration Tribunal and was granted approval to Subdivided.

Community Submissions

And sadly that decision lapsed due to him not being able to go ahead with developing homes on his property.

The Town has once again Stifled Progress and denied stimulating land for development by going against the wishes of its rate payers and owners of land and homes at Southern End of West Road.

And once again I find that these decisions by council are hypocritical and you want your cake and eat it too.

On the one hand you say you want a monetary benefit generated from Differential Rating applied to land owners but you expect them to sell at a loss just so you can apply differential rating.

Which will not increase any further sale of properties to increase development or more rates back to council as my half acre property can only have one home on it not four.

So I find that council is not doing its job properly it should be allowing me to build and subdivide my property to benefit me and my community.

7. Other Councils in Perth are more Progressive in Develop Precious Land Resources.

Other riverside suburbs in Perth have been given approval to strata and subdivide for development of high rise, strata and sub division not more than 15-20 feet from river as in Elizabeth Quays, Ascot Waters, Bayswater, Caversham Rockingham, Mosman Park and Fremantle.

All of which are currently selling land between 491-500 Sqm for \$5-620K. Yet my property at 2046 sqm can not even get a sale at \$575K.

Why as you well know due to Impediments imposed by Council, DFES & DWER.

8. Self Funded Retirees rely in Land Assets.

I find that Council is trying to substate this increase in rates without any regards to the personal situation of the rate payers or owners who may well be Self Funded retirees.

Who may well not have a current well paid income but are hoping for a change to DWER rulings in order to realize even a modest retirement.

9. ERMIC has still not resolved item 2.9 re its Flood Plain report re West Road.

The fact that council has tried to introduce differential rating for a third attempt when the owners have implored council not to do so has fallen on deaf uneducated ears.

Especially as submissions by me and other owners in the southern end of West Road have already objected to.

Community Submissions

And for which council agreed would put off deciding upon until the notification of the ERMC item 2.9 of Policy Nbr 4 of 10 local planning laws.

Which should have been resolved by Jan or Feb 2021 but has not been according to an email I received back from (Town of Bassendean officer) in March and council in 2021.

So as far as I am concerned council has an ethical obligation to not introduce the new differential rating system until that full and final ERMC report is tabled at a full council meeting etc.

10. Railway Station Precinct Housing.

That I along with other land owners and rate payers have consistently had to fight council since 2008 for resolution re the towns new planning laws.

In respect of high rise or subdivisions, strata or on flood plains while all rest of Perth suburbs have been able to realize massive profits while we have not.

That the State Government since 2008 has also upgraded their railway stations in the Bayswater area in line with social housing to be along or within the vicinity of these new railway stations with increased town houses.

Especially being so close to the 5-8 km radius vof Perth CBD or Airport. Including allowing increase of factories between Bayswater and Tonkin Park in Bassendean.

So I am at a complete loss as to why council is denying me the right to develop my property in line with those other major development achievements.

11. Continual stops or backs the rate payers to assist them to develop their properties to the true potential

That I have had to continually badger and be penalized by council, DWER, DFES over the past extremely hard 4 years.

For being good citizens looking after my vacant land , while also residing in the district as an owner of my own home paying my rates that contribute to the up keep of council is absolute slap in the face.

That the lack of development opportunities afforded me by Council, DFES, DWER will see me also loose anywhere between \$1-300K due to all the building restrictions re the flood plain.

Due to two main facts that we can not subdivide or be allowed to put any style home on the block or place the home in its best location.

And that unlike other land or home owners are required to submit Emergency Exit plans.

Which we know from Ron Ainsworth tabled Hydrology report to council between 13 Dec 2016 to Mar 2017 as approved by the State Administration Tribunal proves that

Community Submissions

those in council making these planning decisions have not kept up to date with either technology or community sentiments.

12. Why has my vacant land taken 27 years to sell.

I find now that although you Ms Peta Mabbs have afforded me the courtesy of further assistance from the towns ex planning officer (name supplied) in respect of an architect plans provided to council by a prospective buyer.

That the property was not afforded an offer of sale by that prospective buyer, not because the price was too high but rather due only to the architect being told that Undercrofts can not be used as livable areas.

Yet I do not think that the prospective buyer or architect was advised that at the time of their first enquiry to council.

And so unfortunately for us they would have been required to have submitted new plans at a far greater price to them to change their main design.

So these are all decisions made by council and have been nothing that I am doing to restrict the development of my property for myself or the rest of the community.

I am very very disappointed with council now to the point where I sincerely feel that I would even vote with other rate payers for a vote of no confidence in either its current councillors or its planning staff or their decision making efforts in respect of my property.

To the point now where I feel it is time to contact the Minister for Department of Local Government and the WA Planning Department with a request that they review the Towns decisions thus far along with those ridiculous and non sensical objections by DWER or DFES.

13. Summary.

I find that Council is very remiss in its treatment of its land owners.

Some who have being trying to sell their large blocks for more than 10 - 20 years.

That these worn out transactions make for very poor customer service or resolution (edited).

That there has not been one shred of concrete evidence provided to me by the Town to prove its case that the Town is having major difficulty maintaining its services.

And that 2.9% of its rate payers as perhaps larger land owners need to pay for any council deficit while it affords no further or equal compensation by the remaining 97.1%.

The Federal Australian Taxation Office already taxes earnings across the Wealth Spectrum.

Community Submissions

And to make the assumption that my property at \$575 with all its already imposed impediments which I cannot even realize a realistic price for.

Is compared to and worth as much as a small business turner over of \$1-2 million is absolute fascism and pure money grab imposed on my assets by council.

They are not the Councils hard earned assets but mine and I am sincerely disappointed that council intends to penalize me in such a harsh manner.

Especially when most home owners annual income would rarely exceed \$60-200K re single or combined income.

So I sincerely hope the Town reconsiders its ill conceived position as you are driving the locals from the area of Ashfield/ Bassendean with so many unjustified restrictions in the modern era.

When what you should actually be doing as a council is encouraging more social housing or sub division of larger blocks , even on the established streets in the fringe of the flood plain to accommodate more homes to recoup more normal standard rates from.

(name supplied)

Submission 21

Thank you for the letter regarding the proposed Rates for next year.

We support the 2% rate rise proposed and would support a significantly greater increase if Council determined that was necessary.

Local government resources are currently stretched as they provide support to those seriously impacted by the pandemic while experiencing reduced revenue at the same time. Though some have been seriously affected and need support, the majority of the community are in a stronger financial position than they were before the pandemic, with historic government support and low interest rates. In order to better support those that need help as well as the future viability of the Town of Bassendean we would request further rate increases.

Now is the time for the community to look after each other more than ever and local government is the best way to do this.

Thank you again for writing to us requesting our feedback.

(names and addresses supplied)