

Your vision for Port Stephens

Questions for candidates for election to Port Stephens Council in 2017

Port Stephens Greens wish to assess where candidates stand on a range of issues, in order to assess which candidates share our values and priorities.

Candidates should preferably answer Yes or No to each question, but may add comments. In the absence of a Yes or No answer, or if comments qualify the answer, we reserve the right to make our own judgement about whether you do or do not support a proposition, and publicise your response accordingly.

If there is insufficient space for your comments, feel free to attach further pages with cross reference to the relevant Question No.

Please also feel free to send us any other information about your vision for Port Stephens, and what you see yourself offering in pursuit of that vision.

Please return as soon as possible to email@portstephensgreens.org.au

Based on your responses, we may invite candidates to address our Local Group.

Thank you.

Name of candidate: **Luis Gomez-Fort. Standing for Central Ward**

Date: 20/08/2017

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Yes (Y) or No (N)?</i>
Governance, transparency and accountability	
Q1. Will you support re-introduction of web-casting of Council meetings?	y
Comment?	
Q2. Will you support re-introduction of a Council committee cycle that allows for at least two weeks consideration in public of papers on the Council agenda?	y
Comment?	
Q3. Will you support full disclosure of the detailed financial accounts of all Council business enterprises including its Holiday Parks?	y
Comment?	
Q4. Will you support full disclosure of the costs to Council of legal actions?	y
Comment?	

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Yes (Y) or No (N)?</i>
Q5. Are there any circumstances in which you would favour a merger between Port Stephens and any other adjoining LGA?	Maybe
Comment? There may be some circumstances where the issue needs to be considered	
Planning approvals and compliance	
Q6. Will you support a minimum public exhibition period of 4 weeks (excluding public holiday weeks) for DAs and other planning proposals which are clearly of major interest or significance to the community?	y
Comment?	
Q7. Will you support giving greater priority and resources to monitoring of compliance with conditions of approvals, and, where necessary, to enforcement action?	y
Comment?	
Ecologically sustainable development	
Q8. Do you agree that protection of the natural environment needs to be given greater weight in Council planning and land use decisions? (e.g. to limit land clearing)	y
Comment?	
Q9. Do you accept that man-made climate change is increasing risks from sea level rise and more frequent and intense storms and bush fires, and that Council should adopt policies to adapt to the risks, including by limiting development in low lying areas and in bush fire prone areas?	y
Comment?	

Issue	Yes (Y) or No (N)?
Q10. What if any role do you think Council should play in relation to the Port Stephens-Great Lakes Marine Park?	y
Comment? Better land management that would improve water quality	
Q11. Do you see any potential for coal seam gas extraction in Port Stephens?	N
Comment?	
Q12. Do you agree that proposed expansion of sand mining and hard rock quarrying operations in Port Stephens would impose unacceptable levels of heavy vehicle traffic, habitat destruction and other adverse effects?	y
Comment?	
Q13. Should Council actively promote the use of renewable energy and energy conservation, both in its own operations and in the general community?	y
Comment:	
Q14. Should Council actively lobby the State Government to implement a ban on the supply by retailers of single use plastic shopping bags, to reduce both the environmental impact and the costs to Council of disposal?	Y
Comment: a first step would be to replace the single use with multiple use bags	
Koala Protection Q15. Will you support an urgent review and update of the Port Stephens Comprehensive Koala Plan of Management, with a view to stricter protection of koala habitat and movement corridors?	y
Comment: I strongly support this issue	
Q16. Will you support major Council expenditure (up to \$2.8 million) on a Koala hospital/tourist attraction at One Mile Beach which is based on an estimate of	maybe

Issue	Yes (Y) or No (N)?
45,0000 visitors a year paying \$15 each within three years of opening?	
Comment: I would want to see the financial business case first before deciding	
Social, health and welfare policies	
Q17. Will you support Council actively working with State and Federal governments to increase the supply of affordable housing in Port Stephens, including more not for profit social housing? (e.g. through Council's zoning and planning functions)	y
Comment?	
Specific local issues	
Williamstown contamination Q18. Will you support Council actively lobbying for State and Federal Government solutions to the problems of PFOS/PFOA contamination around the Williamstown airport and RAAF base, and back this up with Council action such as better drain management?	y
Comment? I have reservations about the better drain management as improved drainage may make the problem worse and spread contamination to more land holdings	
Mambo wetlands Q19. Will you support Council lobbying the State government to buy back the land sold by the Department of Education in 2016 and incorporate it into the Mambo Wetlands Reserve?	y
Comment? Council should have bought the land when it was offered at oction	
Tomaree Lodge Q20. Will you seek to ensure that when Tomaree Lodge closes (in 2018), the land is used for public purposes and not sold for private development?	y
Comment?	
Nelson Bay Town Centre	y

Issue	Yes (Y) or No (N)?
Q21. Despite Council's recent approval of an apartment building more than double the current height limit, will you support new strict height limits on new buildings in the Nelson Bay town centre to ensure that they do not breach the tree line on the surrounding hills and ridges, when viewed from the foreshore?	
Comment?	
Your affiliations and preferences	
Q22. Are you a member of a political party, and if so which party? (whether or not you are standing as an independent)	N
Comment:	
Q23. Will you or your Group be directing preferences to any other candidate(s), and if so, which?	N
Comment?	
Q24. Will you be receiving more than \$1000 in financial or in-kind support for your campaign from any one or more donor(s) (person or organisation), and if so who?	N
Comment?	