

Ref CTS 06737/07

16 August 2007

Mr N J Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Cnr Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to a letter received from the Office of the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport, dated 31 May 2007, enclosing a copy of Petition No. 796-07 lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

The Petition requests that the House immediately rescind the new valuations, to review the process involved to make valuations more reasonable and to ensure that from now on and at no charge to the property owner, each new valuation is accompanied by a detailed description of the process and relevant benchmarks involved to reach the new amount.

The *Valuation of Land Act 1944* (the Act) provides for the making of Valuations for rating and taxing purposes. The Act provides no mechanism to rescind a valuation of a local government. Once issued, a valuation remains in force until a fresh valuation is made of the whole local government area or an individual valuation is amended.

The Act provides a number of mechanisms for ensuring that valuations are equitable. These mechanisms include the right of a landowner to object and appeal against the amount of the valuation. It also allows the chief executive to amend a valuation found to be in error.

The valuations in the principal petitioner's area were reviewed as part of the standard objection process and the landowners retain the right to appeal the objection decisions to the Land Court of Queensland. The existing grievance process is considered to be reasonable and equitable. The local government is required to use the amended valuations for local government rating purposes from the date the valuation comes into force (30 June after the date of issue of the annual valuation).

At this stage there are no plans to review the valuation process.

Currently the Department of Natural Resources and Water provides a valuation notice, an explanatory brochure and additional information on the department's website at the time that the annual valuation is issued. The website information includes information on how valuations are made and details of the objection process. Samples of residential sales (benchmarks) used to support levels of value applied were also provided on the websites. The latter information was an addition to the information accompanying valuations and has proved to be of assistance to landowners.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Signed

Craig Wallace MP
**Minister for Natural Resources and Water and
Minister Assisting the Premier in North Queensland**