

28 July 2006

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Dear Shane,

I offer the following comments in relation to the proposal to amend the LG Act 1999 in relation to differential rates.

Recommendation 1 - Removal of the ability to rate by Development Plan Zones.- NOT SUPPORTED.

The recommended changes would impose a considerable administrative burden on the 15 Councils already raising rates which rely on development zones with few tangible benefits as it would require them to amend their basis of rating. Mitcham declares a differential separate rate (as per section 154 of LG Act 1999) based on a development zone (Blackwood District Centre Zone). The proposed changes would require this to be amended. The discussion paper is unclear as to whether the 15 Councils include those, like Mitcham, that raise a differential separate rate based on a development zone.

Recommendation 2 – Not to pursue the raising rates based on the creation of a secondary land use code. SUPPORTED.

The application of tenancy apportionment is generally sufficient to allow for rating of separate occupation.

Recommendation 3 – Expansion of the number of land use categories. NOT SUPPORTED.

The current codes are the ones defined and used by the Development Act and have been relied on for many years and are the most appropriate to be used for rating purposes. It would be very difficult to define what the correct number of codes should be and at what point they would be too cumbersome to be effective.

Recommendation 4 – Development of Guidelines and Advanced Training Courses SUPPORTED

The provision of clear policies and working practices to promote consistent and transparent decisions can only improve how Local government officers deal with Land issues.

Yours sincerely

MILO RUBBO
MANAGER FINANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE