IPTI Xtracts

Property Tax and Assessment News from Around the World

AUSTRALIA – July 2022

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STATE OF ORIGIN? QLD PUTS LAND TAX ON INTERSTATE PROPERTIES

The Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 (Qld) (the Bill) was introduced following the announcement of land tax reforms in the 2021-22 Budget Update. The Bill was passed on 24 June 2022, with the changes commencing on 1 January 2023 and applying to Queensland land tax assessments in the 2023-24 financial year.

The amendments will change how land tax will be assessed for individuals, companies, trustees and absentees who own land both in Queensland and interstate.

The changes have been implemented to close, as described by the Queensland Government, a land tax 'loophole' where interstate investors with a number of properties in different States have had access to tax-free rate thresholds. The Queensland government has announced that by closing this 'loophole' it provides a 'fairer system' whereby interstate investors will be treated the same as Queensland investors.

LAND TAX CHANGES

Prior to the changes, land tax in Queensland has been calculated on the value of landholdings owned within Queensland only if the value of those landholdings exceeds the tax free threshold (ie $600,000 for individuals other than absentees and $350,000 for companies, trustees and absentees).

However, under the new framework, land tax will now be calculated on the total value of all land owned by that taxpayer throughout Australia.

For example:

An individual owns:

(a) a Queensland investment property valued at $400,000; and
(b) a New South Wales investment property valued at $700,000.

Prior to the changes, no land tax would be payable in Queensland as the individual's total Queensland landholdings are $400,000 and thus below the land tax threshold of $600,000 for individuals. The New South Wales investment property was disregarded in working out Queensland land tax.

However, the recent changes mean that all of the individual's Australian landholdings are taken into account. Using the example above, the New South Wales investment property and Queensland investment property will be aggregated. The individual now has total Australian landholdings of $1,100,000. Land Tax will initially be assessed on this whole amount but then apportioned to Queensland as per the calculation below.

Step 1: Taxable value of Australian landholdings = $1,100,000. Land Tax at the Queensland Rate = $6,150.

Step 2: The tax is then apportioned between the Queensland and non Queensland properties.

$6,150 x ($400,000 (Qld Property)/$1,100,000 (Total Australian Property)) = $2,236.36.

NOTIFICATION TO QUEENSLAND REVENUE OFFICE

The Commissioner will issue pre-assessment notices to owners they identify as owning land in Queensland and interstate. Owners will be required to notify the Commissioner of their interstate land holdings by either confirming the pre-assessment notice issued or amending it to include any land they own interstate and its unimproved value (as per their interstate government valuations).

Notification of this information must be made to the Commissioner:

- within 30 days of the assessment notice date and where the assessment notice is issued before 30 September 2023; or
- on or before the 31 October 2023 where the assessment notice is used after 30 September 2023.

Owners may have interest and penalty tax imposed on them under the Taxation Administration Act 2001 (Qld) (the TA Act) if they fail to notify the Commissioner of their landholdings. Further, they may be subject to an offence under the TA Act (ie civil penalties of up to $14,375).

WHAT NEXT?

These changes apply to companies, individuals and trusts and are a significant change in the Australian land tax regime. Other jurisdictions will probably start looking at these changes with much interest.

FALLING VALUES SPREAD TO 40% OF AUSTRALIA'S HOUSE AND UNIT MARKETS

Australia's housing market downturn is gathering momentum as consecutive rate hikes, rising inflation and weaker consumer confidence places additional pressure on values.

CoreLogic's interactive Mapping the Market tool, updated today, shows 41.9% of house and unit markets analysed in the June quarter declined in value, a significant increase on Q1, when 23.6% of markets recorded a fall in values.

Using the CoreLogic Home Value Index, a methodology widely used by economists and institutions nationally, 3,085 capital city house and unit markets were analysed to provide a national overview of quarterly and annual changes to median values.

CoreLogic Economist Kaytlin Ezzy said the updated data showed a significant uptick in the proportion of declining markets compared to March, when values were falling predominantly in Sydney and Melbourne markets.

"This analysis captures two of the three recent rate hikes so it's not surprising to see the added downward pressure has had a broader impact on the housing market," she said.

"Signs of a slowdown and falls in value were already evident before the rate rises, but are now becoming more widespread across Sydney and Melbourne, and beginning to impact the more expensive areas of Brisbane, Canberra and Hobart. Historically, premium suburbs are more volatile than the more affordable areas, values shoot up much faster during an upturn, but are among the first to fall during a declining market."

The CoreLogic Home Value Index, showed national dwelling values declined -0.2% over the June quarter, with every capital city and broad rest of state region well past their peak rate of growth.

Growth conditions across Sydney weakened significantly over the period, with house values falling -3.0%. Although 81.1% of house markets analysed recorded a fall in values over the three months to June, three out of four suburbs still have a median house value of more than $1 million with no house markets under $500,000.

Ms Ezzy said due to relative affordability, Sydney's unit market was slightly more resilient than its house market, with unit values declining -2.1% over the quarter.

Almost two thirds of the Sydney unit markets analysed had a median value of between $500,000 and $1 million, while 30.6% recorded a median above $1 million. Only 19 areas recorded a median value below $500,000.

The slowdown previously seen across Melbourne's inner east has become more wide spread, with 80.0% of the city's house markets falling in value over the quarter while almost 60% of unit markets recorded a fall, Ms Ezzy said.

"Units nationally have proven to be slightly more resilient than house markets, which largely comes down to affordability. While units in some of those more expensive inner-city areas are starting to decline nationally, fewer unit markets fell over the quarter than houses."

While growth conditions in Brisbane remain positive, signs of easing are evident Ms Ezzy said with 11.6% markets recording a quarterly fall in values. Of the suburbs analysed, 120 (35.7%) recorded a median house value in excess of $1 million, up from 33.2% in the March quarter.

Only 10 of Brisbane's 180 unit markets declined in value over the quarter, with four suburbs in the Logan-Beaudesert region are among the country's most affordable, recording median values below $250,000.

Adelaide had the strongest quarterly growth in house values amongst the capitals at 5.1%.Henley Beach South house values, down -1.0%, was the only house market to decline during the quarter.

"Adelaide has recorded the strongest growth in the past quarter, but has shown an easing in the quarterly rate of growth since February this year," Ms Ezzy said.

"A quarter of Adelaide's house markets are recording a median of $1 million or more, yet despite its recent growth, it also remains relatively affordable with a number of unit and house markets still recording a median of less than $500,000."

After WA's state border opened in March, Perth's house values surged 2.2% over the three months to June, with fewer than 20 markets recording a decline in values in the June quarter. Perth housing values remain the lowest of any capital city.

Hobart's median house value declined -0.5% to $796,863 in the June quarter with more than half the markets analysed recording quarterly falls, while only three unit markets fell in value over the same period.

In Darwin, house values increased by 3.0% in the June quarter taking the city's median value to $588,928, with only two suburbs recording a quarterly decline in house values. Unit values increased 1.0% for the same period, taking the median unit value to $378,325.

Canberra's median house value increased by 1.2% in the June quarter to $1,065,317, leaving only two of the 83 suburbs analysed with a median house value less than $750,000. Although values have softened in a handful of house and unit markets in the last quarter, there have been no annual falls recorded. Canberra's median unit value increased 2.6% over the quarter to $629,531 in June.

Access CoreLogic's Mapping the Market tool at www.corelogic.com.au/our-data/mapping-market

HOME VALUE INDEX CONTINUES TO FALL, DOWN -0.6% IN JUNE

Home Value Index shows Australia's housing downturn builds momentum in June, driven by sharper falls in Sydney and Melbourne and weakening conditions elsewhere.

CoreLogic's national Home Value Index (HVI) recorded a second consecutive month of value declines in June, down -0.6%, to be -0.2% lower over the June quarter. Continued falls in Sydney dwelling values (-1.6% month and -2.8% quarter) and Melbourne (-1.1% month and -1.8% quarter) were the primary drivers of this month's steeper drop, but housing values were also down in Hobart (-0.2% month and -0.1% quarter) as well as regional Victoria (-0.1% month and +1.2% quarter).

Every capital city and broad rest of state region is now well past their peak rate of growth as trend rates eased across the remaining markets.

Australia's third largest city, Brisbane, has seen growth in housing values flatten out to just 0.1% in June, while Adelaide remains the only capital still recording a monthly growth rate higher than 1.0% (1.3%). Growth in Perth's housing values, which were temporarily showing a second wind as state borders reopened, are again losing steam with values up 0.4% in June.

CoreLogic Research Director, Tim Lawless, noted the housing market's sharper reduction in growth coincides with the May cash rate hike, surging inflation and low consumer sentiment.

"Housing value growth has been easing since moving through a peak in March last year, when early drivers of the slowdown included rising fixed term mortgage rates, an expiry of fiscal support, a trend towards lower consumer sentiment, affordability challenges and tighter credit conditions," he said.

"More recently, surging inflation and a rapidly rising cash rate have added further momentum to the downwards trend. Since the initial cash rate hike on May 5, most housing markets around the country have seen a sharper reduction in the rate of growth.

"Considering inflation is likely to remain stubbornly high for some time, and interest rates are expected to rise substantially in response, it's likely the rate of decline in housing values will continue to gather steam and become more widespread."

The combined regionals index remained in positive growth territory in June, albeit slightly, rising 0.1%, reducing quarterly growth from a peak of 6.6% in April last year, to 2.0% over the three months to June. In contrast, the combined capital cities index was down -0.8% over the June quarter, reducing from a peak of 7.1% over the three months to May last year.

Unit markets are holding their value a little better than houses across the largest capitals. Sydney recorded a -3.0% drop in houses values through the June quarter compared with a -2.1% fall in unit values. Melbourne also showed a smaller quarterly decline in units relative to houses at -0.5% and -2.4% respectively.

"The stronger performance across the unit sector comes after house values consistently outperformed units through the upswing," Mr Lawless said.

"Since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, capital city unit values have risen 9.8% compared to 24.7% for houses, resulting in better affordability across the medium to high density sector."

As housing conditions slow, we are seeing the market swinging back in favour of buyers. While national advertised stock levels remain -7.4% lower relative to 2021, in Sydney and Melbourne, where housing conditions are the weakest, total advertised supply is now 7-8% above the levels recorded a year ago and well above the five-year average. Hobart has seen advertised stock levels jump 48.4% higher relative to last year and inventory is 20.7% higher in Canberra.

In Adelaide, where housing conditions remain quite strong, advertised stock levels are still -16.9% lower than last year and almost -40% below the five-year average. Brisbane (-14.9%) and Perth (-16.2%) are also showing low advertised stock levels relative to this time last year.

Mr Lawless said the rise in advertised supply across some markets is mostly due to a slowdown in the rate of absorption.

"Estimated transactions in Sydney throughout the June quarter were -36.7% lower than a year ago while Melbourne is down -18.3%. At the same time, the flow of new listings added to the market is falling as selling conditions becoming more challenging and listings move into a seasonal lull.

"We aren't seeing any signs of panicked selling as housing conditions cool, in fact the trend is the opposite, with the flow of new listings to the market slowing."

CoreLogic estimates home sales nationally through the June quarter were -15.9% lower than a year ago, but are still holding 13.0% above the previous five-year average.

Tougher selling conditions are evident in weekly auction results, where the combined capitals clearance rate has held below 60% since the last week of May, longer selling times and higher levels of vendor discounting rates across private treaty sales.

Rental markets remain extremely tight around the country, with rents now consistently rising at a faster rate than housing values.

Nationally, rents increased 0.9% in June, taking the annual growth rate to 9.5%. This is the highest annual growth rate since December 2007 when record levels of overseas migration pushed rental demand higher.

"Such strong rental conditions through the current cycle have occurred largely in the absence of overseas migration, although the reopening of international borders is likely now adding further upwards pressure on rental demand," Mr Lawless said.

"A reduction in average household size through the pandemic helps to explain such high rental demand during a time of closed international borders. Additionally, overall rental supply has probably been negatively impacted by the long running downturn in investment activity between 2015 and 2021."

The trend in unit rents has turned around remarkably over the past year, after falling sharply in some cities early in the pandemic. Sydney and Melbourne unit rents are now rising substantially faster than house rents, with tenants taking advantage of more affordable medium to high density rental options.

At the national level, rents have been rising faster than housing values for five months now, placing renewed upwards pressure on yields. After bottoming out at a record low of 3.21% in the first two months of 2022, the average gross yield has increased to 3.33%.

With rental markets expected to remain tight, it's likely rents will continue to outpace growth in housing values, driving a rapid recovery in rental yields. Higher yields may help to offset less demand from investors, although this sector of the market is generally more motivated by prospects of capital gains than rental returns, Mr Lawless noted.

Australia's housing market outlook is becoming increasingly skewed to the downside, with the trajectory of housing values heavily dependent on the path interest rates take.

Mr Lawless said while forecasts vary significantly it's entirely possible the cash rate could rise beyond the pre-COVID 10-year average of 2.56%.

"Under this scenario, the average variable mortgage rate for new owner occupier loans would be approximately 4.96%, more than double the rates in April, adding roughly $720 per month to a $500,000 mortgage or $1,439 per month to a $1 million loan," he said.

Households are likely to be all the more sensitive to rising interest rates due to record levels of debt held by the sector. Household debt to income ratios from the RBA indicate debt levels reached new record highs in the March quarter. The ratio of household debt to disposable income was recorded at 187.2, the large majority (77%) of which was held in housing debt.

"The double whammy of high inflation is another factor likely to weigh on the household sector and ultimately housing demand," Mr Lawless said.

"Non-discretionary inflation is rising at more than double the pace of discretionary inflation, which means households are likely to be saving less as they spend more on essentials such as food, fuel and shelter.

"Lower savings and higher expenses along with rising interest rates will have an ongoing impact on borrowing capacity for households. Reduced borrowing capacity is likely to further diminish housing demand and potentially deflect more home buyers towards the middle to lower end of the pricing spectrum."

Higher interest rates and rising inflation are also both likely to continue to weigh on consumer sentiment. Mr Lawless said housing activity and consumer sentiment are highly correlated and a pessimistic mindset among consumers implies a further reduction in home sales.

"Although sales activity remained above average throughout the June quarter, it's likely the number of home sales will continue to drift lower as housing demand cools and lenders become more cautious in their approach towards borrowers," he said.

How far housing values fall through the downturn remains highly uncertain, however a peak to trough decline of more than 10% is becoming more mainstream across the various private sector forecasts.

The following scenarios vary from city to city depending on the recent and longer term growth trajectory.

- 10% decline in the market would take national housing values back to levels similar to July 2021;
- A 15% decline would take the market back to April 2021 levels;
- A 20% decline in home values would take the national index to January 2021 levels, and only marginally above where home values were in late 2017.

Strong labour markets will be one key factor in supporting mortgage repayments and keeping distressed listings off the market. Generational lows in unemployment alongside a record high participation rate will help households meet debt repayment obligations, despite rising rates and high inflation. A key risk for housing markets would be any material loosening in labour markets, which could be triggered if the cash rate moves to a contractionary setting, reducing economic output.

A substantial accrual in borrower repayment buffers is another factor helping to safeguard the housing market, estimated to be 21 months for owner occupiers on a variable rate mortgage, meaning most households have a significant safety net if temporarily faced with a change in circumstances.

Mortgage stress should also be minimised to some extent by mortgage serviceability assessments at the time of the loan origination. All borrowers have been assessed under a mortgage rate scenario 2.5 percentage points higher than the origination rate, and since October 2021, borrowers were assessed with a buffer of 3 percentage points.

"Under these serviceability scenarios it is reasonable to expect borrowers should be able to accommodate higher mortgage repayments costs, although such a rapid rate of inflation could create some challenges for borrowers on thinly stretched budgets," Mr Lawless said.

REGIONAL RATEPAYERS IN VICTORIA PROTEST OVER COUNCIL PLANS TO INCREASE RATES, WITH CALLS TO CHANGE SYSTEM

You haven't renovated your house and you haven't installed a pool in the backyard, but authorities have decided your property has grown in value and is therefore subject to higher rates. Is that fair?

Key points:

- Ratepayers across regional Victoria are protesting over council rate increases
- Rate rises are not across the board
- Local government representatives say the sector is keen to move away from the rates system

Ratepayers across regional Victoria are protesting over council plans to increase rates for residential homes and farms.

In the south-west of the state, a meeting of the Glenelg Shire Council this week erupted in fiery exchanges as farmers and home owners came to terms with rate rises of up to 220 per cent.

"This is going to push some of them right to the brink and I just think it's so unfair," Portland resident Gary Humm said.

Mr Humm said the increased rates by the Glenelg Shire Council are going to hit farmers already struggling with the rising costs of fertiliser and fuel.

"Rates are based on property values and that's fair enough, but we live in an area where it's mostly farming properties," he said.

"So you've got huge tracts of land and the impact it's going to have on the rural community is going to be astronomical."

Rate rise similar to a year of wages, producer says

Strathdownie lamb and beef producer Andrew McEachern said his rates would go up from $40,000 to more than $60,000 a year.

He said in many cases rates would be of similar value to a year's worth of fertiliser or wages for a full-time employee.

"For a lot of farmers, their rates bill will now be their highest annual fixed cost, which is completely ludicrous," Mr McEachern said.

Glenelg Mayor Anita Rank said residents had "every right" to feel upset.

"This is a difficult and emotive one because the majority of people's rates will go up," Ms Rank said.

"It's basically valued on the capital improved value of people's properties and, as most people would know, people's property values — not only across our shire but across the state — have increased substantially."

Despite Ms Rank casting the deciding vote to pass the controversial rates hike, she joins a growing chorus who say the system needs to change.

Some rates hold steady

The neighbouring Ararat Rural City Council has confirmed it will not increase residential rates at all for the next 12 months.

The council slashed residential rates by 1 per cent in 2021 and by 1.5 per cent in 2020.

Mayor Jo Armstrong said council was keen to keep rate costs in check after receiving more than 700 submissions against a rate rise proposal in 2017.

"There could not have been a clearer message from the community regarding the dissatisfaction with the model put forward," she said.

Ms Armstrong said a ratings advisory group and a citizens jury had been formed as a result.

"The recurring theme in those submissions was not just around process and governance, but really strong concern around sustainability, stability, and the fabric of the community," she said.

However, farmers in the Ararat municipality will incur an average rates increase of 2.35 per cent.

Ms Armstrong said the council had a "pie model" they used to even out the rates burden.

"There is a consistent portion of the contribution that comes from residential ratepayers, from commercial and industrial ratepayers, and from farmland ratepayers," she said.

"That is our way of trying to ride the extraordinary spikes of land valuation, and the associated shock that comes from the hike in land values if we weren't to apply an equitable approach."

Ms Armstrong said the rates system in Victoria was broken.

"We, out in rural Victoria, aren't being taxed effectively to support the infrastructure that delivers the food, water, fibre, and energy into the cities," she said.

"We would love to see a change in approach from the state government regarding the collection of rates."

In the east of the state, the East Gippsland Shire Council has backed down from plans to increase farm rates by 14 per cent by rating farmers at 85 per cent of the general rate.

Deputy Mayor Arthur Allen said councillors had listened to farmers' concerns and would instead set the farm differential rate at 80 per cent.

Councillor John White wanted that rate set at 75 per cent to allow farmers to recover from a series of natural disasters.

"The bushfires were a mere two years and six months ago, and the breaking of the drought two years and two months ago," Cr White said.

Councillor Sonia Buckley agreed agriculture was a critical industry for the shire and also voted against the budget position.

"Although commodity prices for cattle are at record highs, so are production costs," Cr Buckley told the meeting.

"High cattle prices are not a good enough reason to hike rates and create a rates burden for farmers across the agricultural and horticultural sectors."

Calls for system overhaul grow louder

Municipal Association of Victoria president David Clark said councils were hamstrung.

"When we get an increase as a council, we actually don't get any more money. It just means someone else pays less. And that's often misunderstood at the community level," he said.

He thought a way to deal with the volatile rate changes could be to revert back to valuations every few years, but that was a decision that was out of council hands.

He said it pointed to a bigger national taxation question.

"The local government sector would be very keen to move away from rates if there was an alternative," Mr Clark said.

"The alternative could be that whether you would raise it from another section of government, so the federal government, for example, would increase GST by 3 per cent and pass that money through.

"The argument is really about who pays that share."

A state government spokeswoman told the ABC the government was supportive of the recommendation by the Local Government Rating System Review Ministerial Panel to consider the merits of a valuation averaging mechanism for rates.

"Each council is responsible for setting rates within the Victorian government's mandated rate cap based on the needs of their community."

RATES AND VALUATIONS FAQ

How is my property valued?

Your property is valued every year by an independent valuer appointed by the Valuer-General of Victoria (State Government). The Valuer-General does not take instructions from Council, it is a completely independent process that occurs in every municipality every 12 months.

The latest valuation occurred in 2022 and considers the value of your land and any improvements that you've made to your house over time. It also considers the housing market and the prices for which properties have sold in your neighbourhood in the past 12 months. Valuations reflect the value of your property as of 1 January each year.

While Wellington Shire Council issues your valuation notice on behalf of the state government, Council is not involved in the annual property revaluation process. If you disagree with the state government's valuation of your property, you can lodge an objection via the state government's website.

My property valuation has increased, however I have not performed any upgrades to my home. Why?

Property prices have increased dramatically during the Covid-19 pandemic, so many properties have been valued significantly higher than previous years. This may vary depending on the location of your property within the Wellington Shire municipality.

My property valuation has increased by 30% on last year. Does that mean my rates will increase by 30%?

Put simply, no. An increase in your property valuation does not mean that your rates amount will increase by the same percentage. Keep reading for more information about how rates are calculated.

What is a Supplementary Valuation?

From time to time, a supplementary valuation may be made when property value has changed due to a new dwelling, factory, demolition of a building, water infrastructure, fencing or other improvements. Supplementary valuations are carried out between ordinary valuations in order to bring these properties in to line and are based on the same levels of value used for the general valuation.

Supplementary rates notices may be issued based on the new valuation anytime during the year.

What is the rate cap?

Each year the State Government sets a rate cap. This cap limits the increase from the previous year in overall revenue that councils can collect through general rates.

The rate cap applies to the total average rates collected by Council, and not to individual rates notices. The cap for the 2022/23 financial year is 1.75% which means that Council can only raise 1.75% more revenue than the last year.

Since this increase limit applies to properties as an average across the municipality, your individual rates this year may be either higher or lower than the average 1.75% increase.

How are my rates calculated?

Rates are paid on the value of a property compared to the value of other properties in the same municipality. If an individual property is valued higher than the municipality’s property value average, the ratepayer (owner) pays a higher proportion of rates.

Remember, your valuation is done by the State Government, not Council.

The rate cap applies to the total rate revenue collected and not your individual property. This general rates amount is then split among all ratepayers depending on property values and categories.

Council determines the amount of money that can be raised, while staying within the cap. This amount is divided by the total value of all rateable properties in Wellington to determine the Rate in the Dollar.

Council’s Rate in the Dollar is then used to determine how much each property owner needs to pay for their share of rates. Your property valuation is multiplied by the Rate in the Dollar to determine your rate payment amount. The garbage charge, waste infrastructure charge and EPA Levy Charge will be calculated separately as required.

The Rate in the Dollar changes each year to make sure Council cannot collect more revenue than the cap will allow. Please refer to the Rates webpage for the current Rate in the Dollar.

It is a common myth that Councils can request the Valuer-General to increase property valuations in order to generate more rate revenue.

What do my rates pay for?

Wellington Shire Council collects rate payments from home, business and farm ratepayers.

While not every person utilises every service provided by Council, your rate payments fund lots of important services for the whole community.

These include:

• Sport and recreational facilities

• Parks and open spaces

• Roads, footpaths and bridges

• Social programs for adults and youth

• Community services such as leisure, arts and culture facilities

• Support for small business and local investment

• Advocacy on behalf of the Wellington community to other levels of government

• Tourism campaigns

• Emergency management including relief and recovery

Rates not only fund the actual delivery of all these services, they also allow Council to undertake strategic planning to make sure it is done right.

Why are my rates different to other municipalities?

All municipalities vary in size and have a different number of rateable properties. The lower the number of properties, the higher the proportion of rates that is shared amongst ratepayers. Often, councils with a large area to manage have a smaller proportion of properties. This is the case in Wellington and the only way to reduce rates significantly is to reduce the services or capital works provided.

Councils located closer to Melbourne have a larger number of ratepayers and less area to maintain, so rates are typically lower.

I don’t use facilities such as sport stadiums, pools, libraries or visit the art gallery. Why should I pay for them?

Wellington Shire Council funds more than 120 services, many which you would come into contact with every day and not even notice. In addition to recreation and art facilities, your rates pay for your share of social programs, local business investment, parks and gardens, maintenance of roads, bridges, footpaths, walking tracks, grants for community programs and facilities. Paying your share of these services is part of living in a functional and active society.

What can I do if I disagree?

In the first instance, if you disagree with your property valuation by the Valuer-General, you can object and ask for a review via the state government's online portal within 60 days from your valuation notice issue date, please click here.

Once that review has taken place, you will receive a rates notice based on the outcome of the review. If you require assistance paying your rates, Council has various options available. Please contact our Rates Department for a discussion about your specific circumstances.

Your objection may take up to four months to be reviewed by the state government and valuers. During this time you must continue to pay your rates as per your most recent rates notice.

Once the review has taken place:

If an allowance has been approved by the Valuer-General Victoria, a change to your valuation is required. Council will be provided with your adjusted valuation details from the state government and when received, will make the appropriate adjustments to your rate account. At this time you will be issued an adjusted rate notice.
If a disallowance has been determined, no change to your valuation is required. You must continue with rate payments as per your most recent rates notice.

SA GREENS PUSH FOR NEW VACANT PROPERTY TAX

The South Australian government is being urged to introduce a tax on vacant residential properties.

The Greens have urged the South Australian government to introduce a tax on vacant residential properties after reports thousands are empty across the state.

Amid the current rental and housing crisis, census data suggests about 84,000 are lying vacant.

"We have people sleeping on the street, in tents, cars and caravans, yet there are thousands of vacant homes in SA," Greens upper house MP Robert Simms said.

"A vacant property tax would encourage owners to sell or rent out their properties, boosting housing supply at a time when it's desperately needed."

Mr Simms said the tax could be applied on residential properties left vacant, without reason, for more than 12 months and the money raised spent on social housing.

A similar tax already operates in Victoria.

The Greens have also called for other measures to tackle the housing shortage and the pressure on renters, including more investment in public housing construction and the introduction of rent controls.

On Wednesday, Mr Simms will introduce a bill to state parliament to limit rent increases to once every two years in line with inflation.