



Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG
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PRIME MINISTER

RATING APPEALS

WITH PC.
I very much support the proposals in Nick Ridley's minute of 6 January. We need to reduce the scope for appeals against the old 1973 valuation list - particularly once we announce the transitional arrangements for introducing the new business rates - if we are to complete the non-domestic revaluation satisfactorily. I have, as Nick says, also taken separate steps to make sure the resources of the Valuation Office are being used as effectively as possible.

My only reservation is on Nick's suggestion that we should draw ratepayers' attention to the fact that, as a large resort, they can ask their MP to take up their case. They will no doubt be able to do so, and I would have no objection to Nick referring to this if he is pressed during the passage of the Bill. But I would not want to promote the use of this route, for example by including it in Nick's statement. That would actively encourage ratepayers to approach their MPs, which would greatly increase the amount of work involved - and raise the political temperature - compared with the simpler route of taking up cases with the Regional Superintending Valuer direct.

I am copying this minute to Nick Ridley, John Wakeham, Patrick Mayhew, Peter Walker and Malcolm Rifkind, and to Sir Robin Butler.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N.L.'.

[N.L.]

12 January 1989