

NOTE.—For Papers relative to Purchase of Stark's Property, North Shore, Auckland, laid on the Table of the House, 17th June, 1886, in return to Order of 2nd June, 1886, *vide* D.-7, 1886.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 25TH JUNE, 1886. (Mr. Moss, Chairman.)

Mr. J. SPERREY examined.

1. *The Chairman.*] You are the Property-tax Commissioner?—I am.
2. You produce a sketch-map showing the whole of the property adjacent to that purchased from Mr. Stark at Takapuna Point?—I do.
3. The Committee wish to know what was the property-tax valuation for the last four years, and also the valuation of the local rates?—In 1882, 42 acres 3 roods were valued at £4,500; this includes a large portion of No. 1, on the other side of the road.
4. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] Did that include the house?—There is nothing to show what is included, beyond the annual value of the whole property, £150. The improvements were not valued separately; but this year they were.
5. Do you know if the house was built at that time?—I do not know; I do not think it was. There was no report as to the value of buildings in 1883.
6. *The Chairman.*] What was the valuation for 1885?—28 acres 1 rood 16 perches was valued at £15,600.
7. Are there any details mentioned?—£4,500 is mentioned for improvements.
8. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] Can you tell us the value of the other twelve acres?—Very nearly. Part of No. 1, containing 9 acres 3 roods 12 perches, is valued at £2,000.
9. Does that include any improvements?—No; only the value of the land. Then, sections 4 and 5 of No. 1 are valued at £225 for the two sections; they measure 100ft. by 150ft., equal to about a quarter of an acre.
10. *The Chairman.*] Are there any buildings on these?—No.
11. *Mr. Dargaville.*] There is only a road between these two allotments and the property we are speaking of?—Yes.
12. This property (Mr. Stark's) has a sea-frontage, while the others have only frontage to the road?—Yes, that is the position. Then, there are 5 acres 2 roods 20 perches, being part of 1 and 2, which is valued at £950, on the other side of the road.
13. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] We want the other twelve acres accounted for?—The balance of the five acres are included in the small sections on the other side of the road. They are all differently valued.
14. *The Chairman.*] The land has been very much cut up about there, has it not?—Yes. The subdivisions are all shown on the map.
15. You have stated that the valuation was £15,600 for the twenty-eight acres and improvements. When was this valuation made?—In October, 1885.
16. Did you have any special report made on it?—Yes, I did.
17. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] Why did you get a special report made?—In consequence of some remarks that were made in reference to the excessive value put upon the land by the Government.
18. *The Chairman.*] Were any objections made to the valuation of this property?—No, not to this property; but there have been to that of other property in the neighbourhood. They were never, however, brought forward.
19. Mr. Allison's name has been mentioned to the Committee as having made a large offer for this land. Is there any property in the immediate neighbourhood in his name as owner?—I do not think so. Block VI.A is the nearest. With regard to the local rating: the local rates were £3,500 for 1882 for the forty-two acres, and the property-tax valuation was £4,500.
20. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] That looks as if there was £1,000 for improvements?—No; it is known that the whole of the district was greatly undervalued in 1882 for local rating.
21. *Dr. Newman.*] Have there not been revaluations for local rating since that time?—No; the property-tax valuation was adopted.
22. *Mr. Dargaville.*] You say it is well known that it was undervalued?—Yes; the whole of the county was undervalued.
23. *Hon. Major Atkinson.*] Did you suppose your valuation was under at that time?—No; for Mr. Seaman values pretty fully.
24. There was a sudden rise in the value of property in this district, was there not?—Yes, very sudden.
25. *Mr. Wilson.*] In what year did the local bodies accept your valuation?—In 1884.