

Abstract

Landvaluescape is, conceptually, economic reality. It varies spatially and temporally and can be represented as a response surface, in a manner similar to physical landscape. In this research the author looked at how practical and useful it might be, in Britain now, compared to when “the dynamics of land values” (Howes, 1980) was last studied, in a pre-computer age. This study looked at the collection and use of property market related data for production of digital images revealing the economic landscape of Britain, in ‘The Information Age’.

The conceptual framework was developed through literature research on valuation, spatial analysis methods and geoinformation policy. A Policy Delphi was used to test this framework and issues that arise around the operation of markets in property and public information, then to develop possible courses of action by Government,. Overseas examples of value mapping were investigated and, in collaboration with local authorities in Oxfordshire, data were assembled to demonstrate value mapping for the modelling of property tax options.

Howes concluded that large-scale Value Mapping, although impractical then, was likely to become extremely useful to property markets and governments. The hypothesis to be tested was that spatial analysis and valuation techniques and the land use / geodata policy context have changed in thirty years sufficiently to make Value Mapping in Britain viable, so as to justify immediate and coherent steps being taken to overcome any institutional, technical and policy (including tax policy) barriers that might exist.

The conclusion is that, at the present time, despite maturity of spatial analysis techniques and developments in automated valuation and property data modelling, the policy and institutional environment is not yet conducive to the necessary property tax or land information market reforms. A business case for Value Maps exists but remains hard to convert into effective demand for products.

The unique position of Britain as a developed nation with neither a ‘cadastre’ nor a comprehensive *ad valorem* property tax means that the business case is largely dependent on market-led initiatives in spatial information – including land

use and value - collection and integration. Significant business benefits would result from a fundamental re-engineering of property market information processes but the policy drivers are diffuse. Climate change is most likely to be the driver that triggers a British Value Mapping programme.

