



The Second Whitstable Survey

THE REPORT of the Land Institute on the reassessment of site values at Whitstable, Kent, updates the figures and the arguments produced in the first pilot study, which was made under the auspices of the Rating and Valuation Association in 1963.

This second study of Whitstable had the advantage of being under the same personal direction as the previous one - that of Mr. Frank Othick, then Secretary of the Rating and Valuation Association (now retired) and now Secretary of the Land Institute. No less an advantage was the fact that the valuer was again Mr. Hector Wilks.

The object of this revaluation was not merely to re-affirm the practicability of levying rates on site values, - as indeed it does - nor just to have a new set of site valuations to compare with recent revaluation made on the existing system, valuable as these two objects will be shown to be. In undertaking the second survey it was sought to establish experience of a revaluation as such, having regard for the changes both local and national that have taken place over the last ten years, that would affect the valuation and the deductions to be drawn therefrom, and to apply throughout the exercise the lessons learned from the first, so disposing of questions left unresolved in the minds of critics.

The second survey has more than justified itself as the Land Institute's Report shows.

It has never been claimed by responsible advocates of site-value rating that this system has no problems - of course it has. But the extent of these problems have been demonstrated effectively as being far less

than those experienced under the present rating system. As for the desirability and justification of site-value rating, little can be added to what has repeatedly appeared in these columns.

The important thing now is that the Government should acknowledge the advantages, political as well as social, that site-value rating offers and take a fresh look at it instead of relying on outdated criticisms now disposed of.