

## **Rent Assessment Committee: Summary reasons for decision. Rent Act 1977**

### **Address of Premises**

1 CROMER VILLAS  
52 STATION ROAD  
SEVENOAKS  
KENT, TN14 7DJ

### **The Committee members were**

Mr I W Collins FRICS IRRV  
Mr Tim Wakelin  
Mr R Athow FRICS MIRPM

### **1. Background**

On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2003 the landlord applied to the rent officer for registration of a fair rent of £1,185 per month for the above property.

The rent payable at the time of the application was £396.50 per month.

The rent was previously registered on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2001 following a Rent Assessment Committee with effect from the same date.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2003 the rent officer registered a fair rent of £432.50 per month with effect from the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2003.

By a letter dated the 5<sup>th</sup> September 2003 the landlord objected to the rent determined by the Rent Officer and the matter was referred to the Rent Assessment Committee.

### **2. Inspection**

The Committee inspected the property on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003 and found it to be in good condition.

The following tenant's improvements had been made to the property. Fitting of radiators, boiler flue, wc pan, wash hand basin and kitchen fittings.

### **3. Evidence**

The Committee received written representations from the landlord's agent and these were copied to the parties. Neither party requested a hearing at which oral representations could be made.

### **4. The law**

When determining a fair rent the Committee, in accordance with the Rent Act 1977, section 70, had regard to all the circumstances including the age, location and state of repair of the property. It also disregarded the effect of (a) any relevant tenant's improvements and (b) the effect of any disrepair or other defect attributable to the tenant or any predecessor in title under the regulated tenancy, on the rental value of the property.

In *Spath Holme Ltd v Chairman of the Greater Manchester etc. Committee* (1995) 28 HLR 107 and *Curtis v London Rent Assessment Committee* [1999] QB 92 the Court of Appeal emphasised

(a) that ordinarily a fair rent is the market rent for the property discounted for 'scarcity' (i.e. that element, if any, of the market rent, that is attributable to there being a significant shortage of similar properties in the wider locality available for letting on similar terms - other than as to rent - to that of the regulated tenancy) and

(b) that for the purposes of determining the market rent, assured tenancy (market) rents are usually appropriate comparables. (These rents may have to be adjusted where necessary to reflect any relevant differences between those comparables and the subject property).

### **5. Valuation**

Thus in the first instance the Committee determined what rent the landlord could reasonably be expected to obtain for the property in the open market if it were let

today in the condition that is considered usual for such an open market letting. It did this by having regard to the evidence supplied by the parties and the Committee's own general knowledge of market rent levels in the area of mid west Kent. Having done so it concluded that such a likely market rent would be £650 per month.

To allow for the tenant's improvements (listed above) and white goods and carpets it was necessary to make a further deduction of £62 per month.

The Committee did not consider that there was any substantial scarcity element and accordingly no further deduction was made for scarcity.

This leaves a net market rent for the subject property of £588 per month.

## **6. Decision**

The fair rent initially determined by the Committee, for the purposes of section 70, was accordingly £588 per month. However, by virtue of the Rent Acts (Maximum Fair Rent) Order 1999 the maximum fair rent that can be registered in the present case is the lower sum of £435.50 per month.

**Accordingly the sum of £435.50 per month will be registered as the fair rent with effect from the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003 being the date of the Committee's decision.**

Chairman      Mr I Collins FRICS IRRV

Dated            11<sup>th</sup> December 2003

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This document contains a summary of the reasons for the Rent Assessment Committee's decision. If either party requires extended reasons to be given, they will be provided following a request to the committee clerk at the Panel Office which must be made within 21 days from the date of issue of this document.