

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

**Address of Premises**

1A Manor Road  
Rusthall  
Tunbridge Wells  
Kent  
TN4 8RL

**The Committee members were**

Mr Ian Mohabir LLB (Hons)  
Mr Richard Athow FRICS MIRPM

**1. Background**

On 6<sup>th</sup> June 2005 the landlord applied to the rent officer for registration of a fair rent of £450 per month for the above property.

The rent payable at the time of the application was £74.00 per week.

The rent was previously registered on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2002 with effect from the same date at £74.00 per week following a determination by rent officer.

On 11<sup>th</sup> July 2005 the rent officer registered a fair rent of £366.50 per calendar month with effect from that date.

By a letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 2005 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 18<sup>th</sup> August 2005 and found it to be internally in poor condition.

**3. Evidence**

The Committee received written representations from the landlord and tenant and these were copied to the parties.

Neither party requested a hearing at which oral representations would 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 emphasized

- (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 West Kent. Having done so it concluded that such a likely market rent would be £525 per calendar month.

However, the actual property is not in the condition considered usual for a modern letting at a market rent. Therefore it was first necessary to adjust that hypothetical rent of £525 per calendar month to allow for the differences between the condition considered usual for such a letting and the condition of the actual property as observed by the Committee (disregarding the effect of any disrepair or other defect attributable to the tenant or any predecessor in title). The Committee considered that this required a deduction of £150 per calendar 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 £375 per calendar month.

## **6. Decision**

The fair rent initially determined by the Committee, for the purposes of section 70, was accordingly £375 per calendar 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 £367 per calendar month.

Accordingly the sum of £367 per calendar month will be registered as the fair rent with effect from 18<sup>th</sup> August 2005 being the date of the Committees decision.

Chairman

J. Keshavaiah

Dated

18/8/05

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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.