



DEADLINE APPROACHING FOR CHALLENGING BUSINESS RATES ASSESSMENTS

The Supreme Court decision of Woolway (VO) v Mazars LLP in 2015 made huge changes as to how properties in multi-occupation were valued for the purposes of business rates.

Following the decision, the Valuation Office Agency sought to amend the assessments for thousands of properties that were adjoining but had no direct intercommunication so that rather than being valued as one property, they were valued as multiple properties. As a result, many ratepayers saw their business rates liability increase as they lost their entitlement to small business rates relief and any allowances for quantum due to the size of their assessment.

Parliament then intervened to reverse the Supreme Court decision and introduced the 'Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax (Empty Dwellings) Act 2018'. This Act altered the law to enable the Valuation Office Agency to treat separate but adjoining areas within a multi-occupied building as a single property when it is appropriate. However, some properties remain to be valued as multiple assessments when they should in fact be valued as a single assessment which means that ratepayers are overpaying.

The opportunity for ratepayers to apply for their properties to be merged back together as a single assessment is only open until **31st December 2019**, therefore **the time to act is now!**

Mairéad Gethings of FHP Property Consultants comments:

"I would urge any ratepayer who thinks that they might have been affected by the changes following the decision of Woolway v Mazars to get in touch as there is only a very small window of opportunity to challenge the changes".

For further information or if you would like to speak to FHP about how we may be able to help you with any business rates liabilities you may have please contact Mairéad Gethings on 0115 950 7577 or mairead@fhp.co.uk

END

Mairéad Gethings
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