

Appeal No. VA05/2/025

**AN BINSE LUACHÁLA  
VALUATION TRIBUNAL  
AN tACHT LUACHÁLA, 2001  
VALUATION ACT, 2001**

**Joseph & David Dolan**

**APPELLANT**

**and**

**Commissioner of Valuation**

**RESPONDENT**

RE: Hotel at Lot No. 13, Main Street, Townparks, Carrick-On-Shannon, County Leitrim.

**B E F O R E**

**Michael P.M. Connellan - Solicitor**

**Deputy Chairperson**

**Frank O'Donnell - B.Agr.Sc. FIAVI.**

**Member**

**Michael F. Lyng - Valuer**

**Member**

**JUDGMENT OF THE VALUATION TRIBUNAL  
ISSUED ON THE 31ST DAY OF AUGUST, 2005**

By Notice of Appeal dated the 12th day of May, 2005 the appellant appealed against the determination of the Commissioner of Valuation in fixing a rateable valuation of €603.00 on the above described relevant property.

The Grounds of Appeal as set out in the Notice of Appeal are:

"Valuation excessive and inequitable."

This appeal proceeded by way of an oral hearing in the offices of the Tribunal, Ormond House, Ormond Quay Upper, Dublin 7 on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, 2005. At the hearing the appellant was represented by Ms. Sheelagh O Buachalla B.A., A.S.C.S of GVA Donal O Buachalla and the respondent by Mr. Damien Curran, M.R.I.C.S, A.S.C.S., B.Sc (Surv.), a Team Leader in the Valuation Office.

### **The Property**

The property is the Bush Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon which is situated on the western side of the Main Street in the centre of the town of Carrick-on-Shannon. It is a 3-star Hotel comprising 47 bedrooms, Function Room, Bar, Lounge, and Restaurant. It was originally two, 3-storey terraced buildings dating from 1907, which were amalgamated and incorporated into a Hotel. In 1994 a function room and conservatory were added. In 2004 this function room was demolished and a new 3-storey block was built to the rear of the property comprising a function room, conservatory at ground level and 25 bedrooms on two floors overhead.

The title is freehold.

### **Access**

The reception is in the old section of the Hotel with direct access to the Main Street. There is also an entrance from the rear car park via a series of corridors and stairs.

The main street is one-way with disk parking.

There is a rear entrance from the main N4 By-Pass road. The subject property is about 200 metres from this road and is not visible from the road.

At the oral hearing both parties having taken the oath adopted their written submission of valuations as their evidence-in-chief and one of the appellants, Mr. Joseph Dolan attended and gave evidence.

**Evidence of Mr. Joseph Dolan under Oath.**

Mr. Dolan stated that he and his brother, Mr. David Dolan, acquired the property in 1991. He said that he was an experienced Hotelier and that the premises slopes from front to rear. The premises was built in a piecemeal fashion. There was no lift in the building but there were 12 separate flights of stairs. It was a difficult building to work. The costs involved were higher than normal – an additional night porter was necessary to deal with old corridors, stairs, rooms above rooms etc.

He said he was involved in the day-to-day running of the Hotel and that this entailed working long hours.

When he and his brother acquired the property in 1991 it was the only Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon on the main N4 – it was very successful. When the By-Pass road was built he opened an entrance from same to his Hotel at his expense to try and compete for passing traffic. In 1998 the Landmark Hotel was opened. This is a new purpose built 51 bed-roomed Hotel with function rooms, bars, restaurants and with a leisure centre. It is twice the size of his Hotel and has a 4-star rating. It has an excellent location on the By-Pass with a frontage opposite the Shannon River on the main road to Sligo and Donegal. It is modern and efficient with good facilities and is easily accessed.

It was, he said, difficult for his 3-star to compete with this 4-star Hotel. Tour Operators, he maintained, only talk to 4-star Hotels. He further pointed out that his rates were 40-45% cheaper than the Landmark.

He maintained that his Hotel operated on a personal basis with local support only.

He also said that 12 of his rooms were substandard, small and of poor standard and that he had to charge lower rates for these.

He said that the Hotel was in the North West tourist region – the worst performing region in the country and that there had been a 25% to 35% decrease in overseas visitors. There was also a decrease in anglers visiting the region.

He said that the Key West Hotel in Rooskey (Co. Leitrim) was a new modern purpose built Hotel with a leisure centre and 3-star rating, on the N4 which is the main Dublin/Sligo road, situated opposite the Shannon River and with easy access.

The 3-star Abbey Hotel in Drumahaire was in a lovely area and close to Sligo town.

In cross-examination by Mr. Damien Curran for the respondent, he said the population of Carrick-on-Shannon was about 2,500 – 3,000 and that it was the county town of County Leitrim. He would not accept that the Key West Hotel in Rooskey was in an inferior location to the Bush Hotel for the reasons already given by him.

Ms. O Buachalla said that the premises was valued on an accounts basis in 1995 when the Hotel had 26 bedrooms. In November 2004 the valuation was increased from €253.95 to €603.00 – an increase of c.42% and that this was inequitable.

Mr. Curran said that he had looked at all of the comparison Hotels and that as the Bush Hotel was in the county town of County Leitrim it was in the best location. He said that location was a main element of valuation and is of primary importance.

### **Comparisons**

The appellant's and respondent's comparisons are at Appendix 1 and 2 to this Judgment respectively.

### **Findings and Determination**

The Tribunal having carefully considered all the evidence and arguments adduced makes the following findings:

1. The Bush Hotel has experienced great difficulty because of the opening of the new By-Pass and of the Landmark Hotel. The hotel cannot be seen from the By-Pass.
2. It has no leisure centre.
3. It is a 3-star hotel as against the 4-star Landmark Hotel.

4. It is of poor layout having being built in a piecemeal fashion.
5. It has high running costs.
6. It has no lifts and has 12 separate flights of stairs.
7. Most importantly it has little or no profile.

Having regard to the foregoing the Tribunal determines the Rateable Valuation of the property to be €494.00 calculated as set out below:

Area: 3529.28 sq. metres @ €28.00 per sq. metre	= €98,819.84
Rateable Valuation @ 0.5%	= €494.10
Say	€494.00

And the Tribunal so determines.