



**FIRST-TIER TRIBUNAL
PROPERTY CHAMBER
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)**

Case Reference : **CHI/24UP/MNR/2021/0132**

Property : **5 St Catherines Road
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 0PP**

Landlord : **Dorrington Residential Limited**

Representative : **Savills**

Tenant : **Mr P Broomfield**

Representative : **None**

Type of Application : **Determination of a Market Rent
sections 13 & 14 of the Housing Act
1988**

Tribunal Members : **Mr I R Perry BSc FRICS
Mrs J E Coupe FRICS
Mr M J F Donaldson FRICS MCI Arb
MAE**

Date of Inspection : **None. Paper determination**

Date of Decision : **6th January 2022**

DECISION

Summary of Decision

1. On 6th January 2022 the Tribunal determined a market rent of £555 per month to take effect from 3rd December 2021.

Background

2. The case concerned the determination of a market rent for the subject property following a referral of the Landlord's notice of increase of rent by the Tenant pursuant to sections 13 and 14 Housing Act 1988.
3. On 4th October 2021 the Landlord served a notice under Section 13(2) of the Housing Act 1988 which proposed a new rent of £600 per month in place of the existing rent of £554.67 per month to take effect from 3rd December 2021. The notice complied with the legal requirements.
4. On 3rd November 2021 the Tribunal received an application from the Tenant under Section 13(4) (a) of the Housing Act 1988.
5. The Coronavirus pandemic and considerations of health have caused a suspension of inspections and Tribunal hearings in person until further notice.
6. The Tribunal issued directions on 22nd November 2021 informing the parties that, unless either party objected, the Tribunal intended to determine the rent based on written representations. The parties were invited to make submissions which could include photographs or videos.
7. The Tenant made representations which were copied to the Landlord. No submission was received from the Landlord or his agent.
8. Neither party objected to the matter being determined without an oral hearing, so the Tribunal determined the case on 6th January 2022 based on the written representations received.

The Property

9. From the information given in the papers and available on the internet, including a previous Tribunal decision, the property comprises a terraced house in an area of similar style properties within Winchester, about 500 metres from the City centre.
10. The front elevation is brick built beneath a pitched slate roof and probably dates from the early years of the twentieth century. There is a good range of shopping and educational facilities within the city.
11. The accommodation is described as including two Living Rooms and a Scullery at ground floor level together with three Bedrooms at first floor level. There is an outside WC but, most unusually, no Bathroom. The third Bedroom at first floor level is accessed through the second Bedroom.

12. The property is in an unmodernised condition. There is no central heating, central hot water system or double glazing. There is permit controlled on-street parking only. There are gardens to front and rear.

Submissions

13. Mr Broomfield states that the initial tenancy began in the 1920's or 1930's, and that he had succeeded to the tenancy in March 2007 on the death of his late mother. The Tenant provides carpets, curtains and white goods.

The Law

S14 Determination of Rent by First-tier Tribunal

- (1) Where, under subsection (4) (a) of section 13 above, a tenant refers to a First-tier Tribunal a notice under subsection (2) of that section, the Tribunal shall determine the rent at which, subject to subsections (2) and (4) below, the Tribunal consider that the dwelling-house concerned might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing landlord under an assured tenancy-
 - (a) which is a periodic tenancy having the same periods as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates;
 - (b) which begins at the beginning of the new period specified in the notice;
 - (c) the terms of which (other than relating to the amount of the rent) are the same as those of the tenancy to which the notice relates; and
 - (d) in respect of which the same notices, if any, have been given under any of Grounds 1 to 5 of Schedule 2 to this Act, as have been given (or have effect as if given) in relation to the tenancy to which the notice relates.
- (2) In making a determination under this section, there shall be disregarded-
 - (a) any effect on the rent attributable to the granting of a tenancy to a sitting tenant;
 - (b) any increase in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a relevant improvement carried out by a person who at the time it was carried out was the tenant, if the improvement-
 - (i) was carried out otherwise than in pursuance of an obligation to his immediate landlord, or
 - (ii) was carried out pursuant to an obligation to his immediate landlord being an obligation which did not relate to the specific improvement concerned but arose by reference to consent given to the carrying out of that improvement; and
 - (c) any reduction in the value of the dwelling-house attributable to a failure by the tenant to comply with any terms of the tenancy.

- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(b) above, in relation to a notice which is referred to by a tenant as mentioned in subsection (1) above, an improvement is a relevant improvement if either it was carried out during the tenancy to which the notice relates, or the following conditions are satisfied, namely-
- (a) that it was carried out not more than twenty-one years before the date of service of the notice; and
 - (b) that, at all times during the period beginning when the improvement was carried out and ending on the date of service of the notice, the dwelling-house has been let under an assured tenancy; and
 - (c) that, on the coming to an end of an assured tenancy at any time during that period, the tenant (or, in the case of joint tenants, at least one of them) did not quit.
- (4) In this section "rent" does not include any service charge, within the meaning of section 18 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985, but, subject to that, includes any sums payable by the tenant to the landlord on account of the use of furniture, in respect of council tax or for any of the matters referred to in subsection (1) (a) of that section, whether or not those sums are separate from the sums payable for the occupation.

Consideration and Valuation

14. The Tribunal first considered whether it felt able to reasonably and fairly decide this case based on the papers submitted only with no oral hearing. Having read and considered the papers it decided that it could do so.
15. The Tribunal is required to determine the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market by a willing Landlord under an assured tenancy. The personal circumstances of the Tenant or the Landlord are not relevant to this issue.
16. Having carefully considered the representations from the parties and associated correspondence and using its own judgement and knowledge of rental values in Winchester, the Tribunal decided that the market rent for the subject property if let today in a condition that was usual for such an open market letting would be £1,200 per month.
17. It could be argued that the house is unlettable in its present condition with the absence of basic amenities, and it would certainly not command such a full rent. However the Tribunal considered that someone might pay a low rent to live in such a property and would adapt their lifestyle around the lack of amenities.
18. Using its experience the Tribunal decided that the following adjustments should be made to the full open market rent to reflect the accommodation offered, condition and lack of amenities:

Lack of bathroom	£150
Lack of hot water	£100
Lack of heating	£100
No inside WC	£100
Basic kitchen facility	£75
Bedroom 3 accessed via Bedroom 2	£30
Tenant's carpets and curtains	£50
Substandard electrics	£40
TOTAL	£645

19. The Tenant made no representation that the starting date for the new rent specified in the Landlord's notice would cause the Tenant undue hardship.

Determination

20. The Tribunal therefore decided that the rent at which the subject property might reasonably be expected to be let in the open market in its present condition by a willing Landlord under the terms of this assured tenancy was £555 per month.
21. The Tribunal directed that the new rent of £555 per month should take effect from 3rd December 2021, this being the date specified in the notice.

RIGHTS OF APPEAL

1. A person wishing to appeal this decision to the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) must seek permission to do so by making written application to the First-tier Tribunal at the Regional office which has been dealing with the case. Where possible you should send your application for permission to appeal by email to rpsouthern@justice.gov.uk as this will enable the First-tier Tribunal Regional office to deal with it more efficiently.
2. The application must arrive at the Tribunal within 28 days after the Tribunal sends to the person making the application written reasons for the decision.
3. If the person wishing to appeal does not comply with the 28-day time limit, the person shall include with the application for permission to appeal a request for an extension of time and the reason for not complying with the 28-day time limit; the Tribunal will then decide whether to extend time or not to allow the application for permission to appeal to proceed.

4. The application for permission to appeal must identify the decision of the Tribunal to which it relates, state the grounds of appeal, and state the result the party making the application is seeking.