

Keeping you up to date - Commercial Property Review

What happened in 2008?

- As a result of concerns over property fraud the Land Registry has brought in new procedures on the registration of land transactions and in an effort to combat mortgage fraud the Council of Mortgage Lenders has introduced new procedures relating to the disclosure of incentives.
- Permitted development rights were changed in October 2008 - subject to conditions, certain common types of development such as loft conversions and rear extensions are now permitted without express planning permission, whereas the construction of new drives or areas of hard-standing of more than 5 sq m if the surface is impermeable will now require express permission.
- The standard rate of VAT on goods and services has been reduced to 15% on the 1 December 2008 until 1 January 2010. There are no changes to the 5% reduced rate on exempt supplies. Particular rates apply to goods and services supplied between 18 – 30 November.
- Obtaining business loan facilities from the banks and other financial institutions has become more difficult in the current economic climate and increasingly the financial institutions are requesting personal guarantees to secure business loans. Individuals should understand the full ramifications and consequences before giving such guarantees.
- The government changed the business rates charged on most empty non-domestic properties and in the majority of cases they are to be charged at 100% after an initial 6 months period of vacation, rather than the previous indefinite exemption.
- Landlords and sellers of commercial properties are required to provide an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) on the sale and letting of almost all commercial buildings and residential lets. There is a further duty to have five-yearly inspections of air-conditioning systems. Those with an output of over 250kW must be inspected by 4 January 2009. In line with this there has been an extension of the availability of tax relief for “green” energy saving measures to residential landlords within their charge for corporation tax

Pardoes Commercial Property Team forms part of the firm's Business Services Group which offers a complete package of commercial services to our business clients. Our Commercial Property Team aims to understand your business and work with you so all your business requirements are satisfied. The team has strong links with agents, surveyors, energy performance assessors, accountants and bankers. We specialise in sale, purchase and leasing of business property, business sales, landlord and tenant matters, mortgages and remortgages, construction, planning, non contentious environmental issues, agricultural and rural business.

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