SAA

Scottish Assessors Association

Revaluation 2017

Commercial Properties Committee

Practice Note 14
Valuation of Computer Centres

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This practice applies to the valuation of purpose built computer centres and those converted from another use.

1.2 The physical nature of computer, or data, centres varies considerably. However, accommodation typically comprises computer hall(s), plant rooms, offices, stores, toilets and other ancillaries. The building will normally be integrated with advanced services including backed–up and un-interruptible power supplies (UPS), environmental control, fire systems and high security features. In addition, the computer hall itself may incorporate other specialist features such as load bearing raised floor, air-lock doors, fire curtains and other construction details relevant to its functional and security requirements.

The building fabric will reflect the services it is integrated with; features may include reinforced floors and roofs, compartmentalised layout, ventilation/exhaust ducting, additional water supply/drainage systems, lighting protection and structural reinforcement.

2.0 Measurement

2.1 It is recommended that all areas be calculated on a net internal area basis including plant rooms and other accommodation specified in 3.1.

3.0 Basis of Valuation

3.1 This category of subject should be valued by application of the comparative principle.

The valuation of the building will be related to office valuation levels and the reduction factors in the following table applied. The approach reflects value levels attributable to this specialist class of property and is not solely related to the physical appearance of the building or standard of finish when compared with local offices.

Description	Reduction Factor
Office accommodation	100%
Computer Hall	75 -100%*
Plant Rooms, corridors and industrial quality accommodation	50% **
Other (including generous corridor space providing a security buffer)	50%

*   Reduction factor dependent on the specification and quality of finish compared to the office accommodation within the building.

**   Regard may be had to a check valuation in line with the local industrial tone.

3.2   Additional Items

Where the valuation rate does not reflect advanced building services such as those found at computer centres, plant and machinery will be a major component of the valuation. Care should be exercised to ensure that this is not understated. Rateable items are identified by reference to the Valuation for Rating (Plant & Machinery) (Scotland) Regulations 2000, as amended.

Examples of items that may be present at computer centres include:

- Mains electricity supply may be routed through UPS units.
- Back-up power supply in the event of mains failure usually by diesel engine and generator set(s).
- Air-handling controlling the building's environment.
- Fire detection, alarm and suppression systems which may incorporate laser based VESDA (very early smoke detection apparatus) and suppression could be gas-based or advanced 'water-mist' systems.
- Security features may include perimeter fencing with vibration detection, barriers/gates, CCTV, door swipe card system and infra-red presence detection.

Wherever possible, actual costs should be obtained and adjusted as required. Reference can also be made to the Rating Cost Guide however this is not exhaustive and may not include some specialist or more advanced items.

3.3   Allowances

In dealing with subjects converted from standard industrial buildings, the degree of specialisation/adaptation of the building fabric may be more modest than would be found at a purpose built facility. Appropriate valuation allowances may be applied although care should be exercised where the valuation reduction factors have been adjusted at 3.1.

4.0   Pertinents

4.1   Items such as car parking or outbuildings which are not reflected in the valuation rate applied should be valued in accordance with local evidence and added separately.