

## Wilks Head and Eve successfully challenge Valuation Office decision to add Heliport to Rating List

### Overview

Contracted by one of the London Boroughs four years ago, Wilks Head and Eve were tasked with identifying any undervalued or missing assessments in their locality with the objective of increasing rates retention revenue.

### The Response

Wilks Head and Eve began to look at commercial activity in the Borough with the goal of matching a rateable value to it and successfully identified a Heliport operating out of premises which did not appear on the local listing.

### Resources for finding missing assessments

The team are highly experienced at finding missing assessments using a number of resources at their disposal such as in-depth rating list comparisons, web and company marketing materials research, site digital photography and historic images demonstrating patterns of occupation. Skilled in knowing just where to look for missing rateable properties, the team go the extra mile to find them.

### Challenges of adding missing assessments to the List

This is only half the battle as Roger Messenger, from Wilks Head and Eve explains *“Unfortunately the Valuation Office Agency are not as well-resourced as they would like to be, making it challenging for them to deal with those Billing Authorities that do find new properties which require adding to the list.”*

### Building a case

In the case of the Heliport, the Valuation Office Agency originally believed that by including the yard where the Heliport was based, they would be effectively double-counting as this area had already been included in the original assessment of the property when setting the rateable value. However what had not been taken into account was the need for two assessments as that specific area of land provides site facilities for the customers of the heliport.



It was subsequently identified that landing fees ranged from £150 to £500 and parking fees from £50 to £150 plus additional charging occurred of £200 to £300 for opening outside of published hours and there were approximately 10 to 20 movements per day. All of this detailed information which was gathered, helped support the appeal and resulted in a rateable value of £50,000 being applied with effect from 1 April 2010.

### Setting a rateable value for missing assessments

In helping set the agreed valuation figure, Wilks Head and Eve conducted thorough analysis into other Heliports operating around the country and coming to a view of what might be a fair and sensible amount. They looked into the detail of the activities occurring at this Heliport and where it was located. This enabled them to identify its close proximity for flights in and out of the City and also its location which provided it with quick and easy access to large entertainment arenas and conferencing centres as well as the ability to travel distances such as Manchester or Paris.

### The Outcome

Wilks Head and Eve handled the whole process for the London Borough from start to finish. With very little client involvement and no need to attend the Valuation Tribunal on the day, there was no drain on their internal resource. With the backdating of the rateable value, the London Borough will receive in the region of £250,000 in additional rates retention revenue this year and ongoing additional annual revenue of around £20,000.