

Who moved them goalposts?

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As you assure yourself that you have dotted all the “i’s” and crossed every single last “T” for the completion of the lease on a new office, the solicitor calls and asks nonchalantly “Can you send over the Lease Plan?” the deafening 3 second silence on the your end of the phone has long given away the clue, that you don’t think you have one!

The Land Registration Act 2002, which came into force on 13 October 2003, has many implications for commercial landlords and businesses occupying properties under commercial leases.

One of the major changes are after 13 October 2003, all new leases with terms over 7 years or existing leases sold or assigned with 7 years left to run must now be registered with Land Registry. Not only will the property acquire its own leasehold title number but it will be noted on the Landlord’s freehold title.

This will bring many more High Street shops, cafes, restaurants, industrial units and offices onto the Register.

As part of the registration a compliant Lease Plan of the lease demise must be submitted.

In order to be compliant the plans must be drawn to a metric scale (normally 1:100 or 1:200), have a scale measurement bar, have the scale noted on the plan, a 1:1250 scale location map (for urban areas) full address including post code and a north point.

The internal layout the office – for example internal offices etc – are not necessary, however indicative locations of comm.

Areas and adjacent stair lobbies should be provided for orientation.

So that wavy walled 30 timed photocopy of the original 1962 hand sketch with a finger thick felt pen line obscuring all detail; will have to be resigned to the big drawing board in the sky.

So the race is on to get a new lease plan before the whistle is blown, and you score an own goal.

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