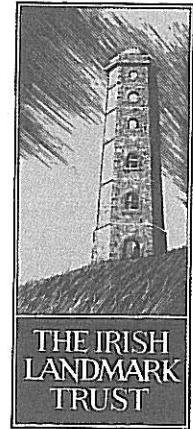


28 May 2009

Mr Jim Kelly
Secretary
Commission on Taxation
Le Pole House
Ship Street Great
Dublin 8



Dear Mr Kelly

The Irish Landmark Trust, an all-Ireland body, secures smaller heritage properties for the nation by leasing them from their owners, carrying out necessary conservation work which is faithful to their original era and purpose, and marketing them as holiday rentals. Since its foundation in 1992, the Trust has financed its conservation work in the Republic through grants from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Heritage Council, OPW, the Millennium Fund, and private donors. Its small administration overhead has been covered partly from the net rentals it receives and partly from private and public sources—primarily Atlantic Philanthropies in the early years, primarily the Heritage Council now. We have 17 properties (some with multiple units) on our books on the island of Ireland, of which 12 are in the Republic.

In the current economic crisis, the Government has repeatedly emphasised the primacy of two crucial policy objectives: the maintenance and creation of employment, and the enhancement of Ireland's competitive position. Against this background, I now wish to submit the following proposition for the consideration of your Commission:

- Investment in the conservation of at-risk heritage properties contributes to the achievement of both key national objectives: through the employment created for professionals, tradespeople, crafts workers and suppliers; and through the broadening and enhancement of the tourism product offered by Ireland in an increasingly competitive world tourism market.
- The conservation work carried out by Irish Landmark Trust employs architects, surveyors, contractors, and sub-contractors, as well as general labourers and craft workers ranging from stone masons to furniture makers. Virtually all projects are in rural areas. The average cost per project is of the order of €500,000, and in a typical year two or three projects are completed. The **import** content of our project expenditures is

TRUSTEES:

CAMILLA McALEESE

chairman

CAROLINE DICKSON

DESMOND FITZGERALD,

- KNIGHT OF GLIN

MAIRÉAD FURLONG

MARY HANNA

JOHN R. HEALY

FIONNUALA JAY-O'BOYLE

ANDREW KAVANAGH

PETER KELLY

EDWARD McPARLAND

FRANK MASTERSON

NIALL POWER SMITH

PETER RANKIN

NICHOLAS ROBINSON

25 Eustace Street,
Temple Bar,
Dublin 2.

T: 353 1 670 4733

F: 353 1 670 4887

50 Bedford Street,
Belfast, BT2 7FW.

E: bookings@irishlandmark.com

W: www.irishlandmark.com

THE IRISH LANDMARK TRUST LIMITED

REGISTERED IN DUBLIN NO. 195260

REGISTERED IN BELFAST NO. N1 31218

virtually zero. A significant proportion of our expenditure finds its way back to the State through income tax and value-added tax.

- Every completed Irish Landmark project materially enhances the local and national tourism products. Especially in today's economic circumstances, it is essential to offer high-quality self-catering options, and Irish Landmark's properties are among the finest available. They act to extend the tourist season beyond the shoulder periods, attracting visitors in every month of the year. Many of the properties we select for conservation are in areas of great natural beauty and heritage interest but little established tourist custom. Unlike new holiday facilities, they place no stress on the landscape and infrastructure. They fit perfectly into the green and natural image of Ireland which Fáilte Ireland strives to promote. Unlike some recent tourism investments, our relatively small-scale projects have a high degree of sustainability.
- The contribution to our work by the Irish taxpayer, through State bodies, has been vital to the development of our existing portfolio of properties. In today's circumstances, we recognise that the availability of such direct funding—even given the economic benefit—may be constrained. We propose, therefore, that some of the State's funding of our activities be provided in a different manner, **through the extension to donors to the Irish Landmark Trust of the provisions of Section 1003 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. This would enable donors to credit donations to the Irish Landmark Trust *made exclusively for the purpose of achieving the conservation of a heritage structure against their taxable income.***

If a proportion of our future investment programme is funded as we propose, we are confident that the benefits to employment will be direct and immediate, while the benefits to Irish tourism will be substantial and permanent.

By separate mail, I have sent you our brochure that describes our work and existing property portfolio in greater detail. We would, of course, be pleased to answer your queries and to make any further explanations or presentation that you may require.

Yours sincerely



Camilla McAleese
Chairman