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## Stobart cuts £1m off value of properties acquired from directors

**TRANSPORT group Stobart has been forced to write down the value of a property portfolio it controversially bought from two directors earlier this year by more than £1m.**

By **Jonathan Russell**, Assistant City Editor

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The revaluation related to the point the "Moneypenny" portfolio was acquired in January, raising questions over the price the company paid for the assets.

The 18 properties were bought from directors Andrew Tinkler and William Stobart for £101.2m in cash, shares and debt after independent valuations.

The price paid was already £2.3m more than the valuation put on the portfolio by property consultants Knight Frank. At the time, Stobart director Richard Butcher said he was satisfied the price paid was a fair one.

Yesterday, the company revealed that one of the properties was overvalued by £1.15m.

Stobart declined to say whether there would be any reduction in the consideration paid to Mr Tinkler and Mr Stobart as a result of the change.

The revelation came as Stobart announced a 30pc slump in first-half profit before tax to £11.9m. The drop was in part due to increased interest payments due to debt taken on in the acquisition of the Moneypenny portfolio.

Revenue for the period slipped by £3m to £278.5m. The company maintained its interim dividend at 2p, payable on December 7.

The results were also hit by the £4.2m cost of restructuring the company's chilled transport division. The costs are understood to relate in part to redundancies.

A spokesman said that, while one of the properties had been revalued at the date of acquisition, the value of the portfolio as a whole had risen slightly over the period. The property that was revalued is understood to be a retail warehouse in Hull. The value was marked down from £11m to £9.8m.

Stobart slipped ½ to 114.3p.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/epic/stob/9633957/Stobart-cuts-1m-off-value-of-properties-acquired-from-directors.html>