

# Historic hotel bids for court protection

By Laura Noonan

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WICKLOW's Grand Hotel is preparing to petition the High Court for examinership, marking the latest blow for Ireland's embattled hospitality sector.

The application -- being made by one of the hotel's owner/directors, John Connellan -- is down for hearing in the High Court on February 22.

Efforts to contact the Dubai-based Mr Connellan were unsuccessful, and staff at the hotel said there was no one else who could answer questions on the process.

The Grand Hotel is one of Wicklow's oldest, independently owned properties. The hotel's latest accounts show losses of almost €425,000 in 2008, more than three times worse than the previous year's deficiency. "The current economic climate is very challenging," the Grand's directors note, adding that the "outlook presents significant challenges".