

SPSO decision report

Case: 201200456, East Dunbartonshire Council
Sector: local government
Subject: handling of application (complaints by opponents)
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C alerted his local council that his neighbour had undertaken development without planning consent. The council investigated and required the neighbour to apply for retrospective planning consent. Mr C took the opportunity to make representations about the development, and the council confirmed that these would form part of the assessment which would be carried out before the application was determined. The council notified Mr C of their decision but he complained that this had been taken without visiting his property to view the development from his perspective and said that the council had not been impartial in their handling of the matter.

During our investigation we took advice from one of our planning advisers. He said that a planning officer can form a judgement about neighbouring properties from visiting the development site. Visiting every property is not practical, bearing in mind that there could be multiple objectors, and the planning adviser agreed that this was a matter for a planner's professional judgement. We did not uphold the complaint, as there was no evidence that Mr C's representations were not fully considered, and the decision about whether to visit his property was a matter of professional judgement.