

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508327, Renfrewshire Council
Sector: local government
Subject: handling of application (complaints by opponents)
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about a planning application for a residential development of houses close to his own. He was concerned about the way the council considered, and then approved, the application. Mr C said that insufficient information was made available to allow the public to make informed objections and that his privacy had been overlooked to the benefit of the developer. Mr C also said that the council did not give proper consideration to their existing policies. During the build, the developer constructed a site office without the benefit of planning permission, and they advertised properties for sale. Mr C brought this to the council's attention but said that they failed to take appropriate action and did not require the developer to stop works. Mr C said that council officers allowed the developer to make a retrospective planning application for the site office, which Mr C felt was to his disadvantage. Mr C also complained about the way the council dealt with his subsequent complaints.

The council took the view that they had provided sufficient information about the planning application for the residential development and that, in deciding it, had taken into account Mr C's objections. The council said that they had noted and looked into Mr C's concerns about the site office. They had contacted the developer about a number of issues and made a site visit. Following this, it was decided that a retrospective planning application was to be submitted and Mr C would be kept updated. It was also agreed that council officers would continue to monitor the site office. Mr C remained dissatisfied and complained to us.

We took independent planning advice and we found that, in accordance with relevant guidance, the council had provided sufficient information for the application for the residential development to be considered reasonably and appropriately. We found that, after Mr C had reported concerns about the unauthorised building of the site office and the use of this site to advertise properties for sale, the council had looked into the matter to ensure that an appropriate planning application was submitted. They did not take enforcement action, but the decision whether or not to do so was a matter for their professional judgement. We considered the council's handling of Mr C's complaints to have been reasonable overall. We did not uphold Mr C's complaints.