

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201707509, The Highland Council  
**Sector:** local government  
**Subject:** handling of application (complaints by opponents)  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that the council had failed to handle a planning application properly and to respond reasonably to complaints about the planning process. Mr C suggested that the council had produced an inaccurate report on the planning application, which had deliberately misled Planning Committee members. Mr C also complained that the council had attempted to improperly influence a statutory consultee by putting pressure on them in order to reverse their objection to the application. Mr C said the council had refused to correct this, even when presented with factual evidence to the contrary.

We took independent planning advice. We found that the council had acted appropriately and that the report had provided an accurate summary of the application, the objections to it and the council's statutory duties. We found that the council had handled the application reasonably and that they had responded appropriately to the complaints they had received. The council did not dispute having contacted the statutory consultee, but said the reasons for this were appropriate. The advice we received agreed with this and we found no evidence that the council had attempted to unduly influence the consultation process. We did not uphold the complaint.