

24 May 2019

Mr D Ritson

BY EMAIL ONLY

Our ref: 19 000 971

(Please quote our reference when contacting us and, if using email, please put the number in the email subject line)

Contact Chris Upjohn on [REDACTED] or by email to [REDACTED]

Dear Mr Ritson

Complaint against London Borough of Croydon

The Ombudsman has asked me to decide if we can and should investigate your complaint. I must first explain that our primary role is to investigate complaints about 'maladministration' and 'service failure'. Which we refer to as 'fault'. We must also consider whether any fault has had an adverse impact on the person making the complaint which we refer to as 'injustice'.

We provide a free service but must use public money carefully but may decide not to start an investigation if, for example, we believe:

- it is unlikely we would find fault;
- the fault has not caused injustice to the person who complained; or
- the injustice is not significant enough to justify our involvement.

We cannot question whether a council's decision is right or wrong simply because the someone disagrees with it. We must consider whether there was fault in the way the decision was reached that is likely to have affected the outcome.

I note you are complaining on behalf of MORA which you say represents 3,879 households in the ward. We do accept complaints from representative organisations but we need to be very clear that we have the consent of those involved.

You are complaining about a planning application for a relatively minor development. I consider any fault there may have been would only affect those in the immediate area, presumably the residents of The Glade or Glade Gardens close to the site. Any injustice may vary and would likely depend on how close someone was to the development.

I have enclosed a copy of our consent form. If you can provide a completed copy of this for all those who wish you to act on their behalf, we will consider the matter further. I will take no further action at present.

Finally, I note you are concerned to see the Council decides future application in accordance with its policies. We cannot deal with hypothetical future decisions. If any of your members believe fault by the Council has affected the outcome of a future application, they should first complain to the Council. They can then complain to us if they remain dissatisfied and we will decide if there is something we should investigate.

Yours sincerely

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Chris Upjohn.

Chris Upjohn
Investigator, Assessment Team