

17 July 2025

Complaint reference:
25 004 901

Complaint against:
East Devon District Council

The Ombudsman's final decision

Summary: We will not investigate Mr X's complaint about the Council's consideration of a planning application. The complaint is late and there is no good reason to exercise discretion to consider it now.

The complaint

1. Mr X complained about how the Council considered a planning application for a new development and did not consider his objections.
2. Mr X complained the Council's decision reduces his privacy.

The Ombudsman's role and powers

3. The Local Government Act 1974 sets out our powers but also imposes restrictions on what we can investigate.
4. We cannot investigate late complaints unless we decide there are good reasons. Late complaints are when someone takes more than 12 months to complain to us about something a council has done. (Local Government Act 1974, sections 26B and 34D, as amended)

How I considered this complaint

5. I considered information provided by the complainant and the Council.
6. I considered the Ombudsman's Assessment Code.
7. I considered the relevant documents on the Council's planning website.

My assessment

8. Mr X complained the Council approved a planning application without considering the impact on his privacy.
9. The Council approved the planning application in 2023. The application was amended and approved again in May 2024. Mr X was aware of the issues at the time the application was approved and then updated, therefore, I see no good reason why he did not complain to us sooner.

Final decision

10. We will not investigate Mr X's complaint because the complaint is late and there is no good reason to exercise discretion.

Investigator's decision on behalf of the Ombudsman