

South Tyneside Council and the Local Government Ombudsman

From: mick.dawson@theharbourview.co.uk

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To: Emma Lewell-Buck MP, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP,
Cllr Angela Hamilton, Cllr David Francis,
Peter Cunningham, George Mansbridge,
Hayley Johnson, Alison Hoy, John Rumney

Bcc: 20 or so

[1 Attachment: toall30-Nov-20.pdf](#) (117 KB)

Dear All,

I've made no secret of the fact that I believe that South Shields Council have been corrupting their complaints procedure and in turn that of the Local Government Ombudsman (Ombudsman) to hide the lack of building control amongst other things. It points to the reticence of their Chief Enforcement Officer to take any action against preferred developers who build what they want rather than what had been allowed.

I've also made no secret of the fact that it is not exclusive to South Tyneside Council and you have to look no further than the Grenfell Inquiry to see what I mean and I also think that the easiest way to put a stop to Council manipulating the system for the benefit of of their favoured clients is for Parliament to make it an offence to lie to the Ombudsman. Whether it be a Civil offence or Criminal one; would be for Parliament to decide.

The current lock down has has given me time to review my correspondence over the years from 2012 and the first three years have been summarised in the 11 page history of our dealings with the South Tyneside Council and a slipway company on the banks of the Tyne, UK Docks.

It became apparent very early on, September 2013, that the were inconsistencies in the plans and drawings made available to the public which could be summarised in one of the first question asked of the Council: *"Could you please confirm what height the structure is being constructed to? It seems that one had approval (12 mtrs), and the other didn't (15.5.mtrs)*

The correct answer to the question, and it has not been answered to this day; *it was built to the one that didn't*. What UK Docks did not realise, and nor did the Council was that the gradient gave scale to the side elevation in any drawing of the structure and that turned out to be about 12.7m.

Apart from the sketch which gave rise to the basic question, the drawings are all drawn to a scale which varied from 1:200 to 1:20 depending on context. The approved drawing which I preferred to use in my arguments with the Council used 1:100 and 1:20, and especially with a scale of 1:100, the conversion is easy when using meters.

When my Solicitor proposed raising a new complaint; *being the misinformation and/or misrepresentation by the Local Authority in supplying information to the Local Government Ombudsman*, it made total sense to me because it was so easy to prove that the Council were telling lies to the Ombudsman by looking at the plans and drawings and comparing that with what she said

in her findings in April 2015

Most of you will have seen Mr Tilbury's letter by now and realise that I never sent him a draft letter. My first draft came to about 10 pages, and by the time I had refined it UK Docks had been given permission to extend their shed and I decided to send the refined version straight to the Chief Executive and to present the facts directly to him. The attachment reflects what I call a cycle of deceit because what UK Docks told the Council was repeated to us then embellished and repeated to the Ombudsman and put myself and the other good citizen back where we began in September 2013.

Needless to say my letter led to another cycle of deceit which was only broken when UK Docks tried to claim that they had been given permission retrospectively for their shed and now all the Council now say about that their complaints procedure has been exhausted - no mention of the Ombudsman at all.

My answer to that is, if the Principal Planning Officer had answered the question first posed in September 2013 honestly there would have been no need to enter the complaints procedure, no Ombudsman and probably no shed. Certainly not what we see now.

You all might be interested to know what happened since UK Docks asked for permission to extend their shed in 2014 and but I have a couple of loose ends which need sorting first and I hope to do that in the near future.

Kind regards
Michael Dawson.