

**Private and Confidential**

Mr Geoff Juden



**Place**

Tower Hamlets Town Hall  
Mulberry Place  
5 Clove Crescent  
London  
E14 2BG

Telephone: 020 7364 4239

[www.towerhamlets.gov.uk](http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk)

25 February 2021

Reference: 25400005

Dear Mr Juden

**Re: Your complaint concerning Removal of Trees at Limehouse Triangle**

Thank you for raising a complaint regarding the Planning Service and your experience concerning removal of trees at Limehouse Triangle.

I am sorry to learn of the issues you have raised and that you are dissatisfied with the Stage 1 response dated 15 December 2020 sent to you by Paul Buckenham, Development Manager.

I can confirm that Antoinette Davey, Senior Information Governance and Complaints Officer, has completed the investigation into your complaint, which was outlined in your email of 6 November 2020 and 18 January 2021.

Ms Davey has reviewed all correspondence and documentation relating to your complaint and my response is based on her investigation.

In your correspondence, you have highlighted that you are not happy about the removal of trees from the site known as the Limehouse Triangle and you do not feel that the Council is adhering to its Bio diversity policy when making planning decisions. You are also not happy that your Stage One complaint was not responded to on time.



I would first like to offer my apologies that your Stage One complaint was not responded to within the target deadline. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, officers are prioritising resources to ensure that statutory services are being delivered which may mean that there are delays in providing other services such as responding to complaints. I am sorry if the delay in you receiving your response caused you any inconvenience and would like to thank you for your patience at this challenging time.

I can confirm that the Council did fund the creation of a nature garden on the site known as Limehouse Triangle in around 2000. The site was intended as an educational nature reserve not a formal designated site of biodiversity interest. The site hasn't been used as a nature reserve in recent years with no real benefit to residents and since 2000 the Council's priorities have changed, and housing is now considered of overriding importance. The trees in question were removed before the planning application was submitted and were replaced by six new trees. However, the on and off-site biodiversity enhancements covered by condition 17 of the planning decision will be sufficient to ensure net gains in biodiversity when compared to the site as it was before the development. You can view the planning decision and specifically condition 17 at:

[https://development.towerhamlets.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=DCAPR\\_133945&activeTab=summary](https://development.towerhamlets.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=DCAPR_133945&activeTab=summary)

Ms Davey's investigation has discovered that there were no objections received either from yourself or the East London Garden Society (ELGS) to the planning application reference PA/18/03347 in respect of 1-12 Parnham Street also known as Limehouse Triangle. Whilst your postal address is outside of the neighbour notification boundary that was used for the planning application, anyone can comment on a planning application whether they received a notification letter or not.

Residents can track new planning applications being submitted via the on-line planning register on the Council's website or by subscribing to the two-weekly bulletin that is issued with the Council's residents' e-newsletter.

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/planning\\_applications/search\\_and\\_comment\\_planning\\_applications.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/planning_and_building_control/planning_applications/search_and_comment_planning_applications.aspx)

If residents believe that any members of the planning committee acted un-lawfully in making a decision, they can seek leave from the courts for a judicial review. Unfortunately, as the decision to grant planning permission for the redevelopment of the site at Limehouse Triangle was in 2019 the three-month period for an application to the courts has now expired.

You have requested that the Council ensure that all planning decisions are made considering the biodiversity of the borough. I can assure you that the Council's new Local Plan, adopted in January 2020, has updated policies for Urban Greening and Biodiversity including policies to protect and increase the provision of trees. These policies will be the starting point when considering all planning applications. You can view the Local Plan at:

[https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/planning\\_and\\_building\\_control/planning\\_applications/Making\\_a\\_planning\\_application/Local\\_validation\\_list/Biodiversity\\_Survey\\_and\\_Report.aspx](https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/planning_and_building_control/planning_applications/Making_a_planning_application/Local_validation_list/Biodiversity_Survey_and_Report.aspx)

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.



You have now reached the end of the Corporate Complaints Procedure and this is the Council's final response. I sincerely hope you accept the contents of this Stage 2 response. If, however, you remain dissatisfied, you may wish to take your complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The details are as follows:

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry CV4 0EH

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

Phone: 0300 061 0614

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AS Sutcliffe', with a small circular mark above the 'S'.

**Ann Sutcliffe**  
**Corporate Director - Place**

