



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

*Department for Communities and Local
Government*

3rd Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dawn Laird
Acting Clerk
Upper Rissington Parish Council
Village Hall
Wellington Road
Upper Rissington
Gloucestershire
GL54 2QW

Tel: 0303 4441719
Fax: 020 7035 0018
Email: theresa.donohue@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dclg

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Dear Ms Laird

Thank you for your letter of 13 October to the Prime Minister about planning enforcement at Cotswold District Council. Your letter has been forwarded to this Department as we have responsibility for planning matters. I have been asked to reply and I apologise for the delay in doing so.

Enforcement action is at the discretion of local planning authorities. The Government has given them a wide range of enforcement powers with strong penalties for non-compliance. However, it is for them to decide what, if any, action to take depending on the particular circumstances of each case.

Local authorities are accountable to their electorate. Where a person is unhappy with the way their authority has handled a particular matter, their recourse is through the authority's formal complaints procedure. If, having been through that process, they remain dissatisfied they can ask the Local Government Ombudsman if they will investigate the matter. The Ombudsman is charged by Parliament with investigating complaints by individual citizens that they have suffered injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities. In a number of investigated cases, the Ombudsman has held that there is maladministration if a local authority fails to take effective enforcement action which is plainly necessary. Further information on the Ombudsman can be found on their website at: <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Theresa Donohue