



Press Release

24 March 2025

Owner of eyesore property fined after council prosecution

A property owner who ignored a legal notice to clean up a derelict building that has become a blight on the local community has been ordered to pay over £1,700 in court fines and costs.

Nitesh Somani has been prosecuted by Fenland District Council for failing to comply with a Section 215 Notice in relation to Strathmore House in Fridaybridge Road, Elm.

The Council served the notice on Mr Somani in March 2024 after investigating concerns from members of the public about the state of the property and the impact it was having on the community.

The notice required the owner to tidy up the overgrown vegetation, board up windows and doors in the building, remove waste from the land and secure the fencing across the front of the property to prevent trespassing.

Mr Somani failed to carry out any remedial works and legal proceedings began.

At Peterborough Magistrates' Court on 12 March 2025, the owner was found guilty in his absence of failing to comply with the Section 215 Notice and fined £660. He was also ordered to pay £800 costs and a victim surcharge of £264.

Mr Somani must still comply with the requirements of the notice and has been given a further six weeks to complete the required works. If the notice is still not complied with, a second prosecution may be considered depending on circumstances.

Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, local authorities can issue Section 215 Notices to owners and occupiers requiring land and buildings to be cleaned up when their condition adversely affects the amenity of the area.

Cllr Dee Laws, Fenland District Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, said: "The Council takes seriously the need for homeowners to maintain their properties to a standard that does not cause harm to the amenity of an area, to neighbouring residents and the wider community.

"While our planning enforcement team always tries to resolve such cases through constructive dialogue, when an informal approach fails to resolve a problem, we will

not hesitate to take legal action when necessary. This case sends a strong message that those who fail to co-operate with the Council could face a conviction and a significant financial penalty.”

Cllr Sam Hoy, the Council’s Portfolio Holder for Housing, added: “This successful prosecution highlights the Council’s firm stance against property owners who neglect their responsibilities and allow their buildings to become a blight on the community.

“Empty and poorly maintained properties not only create an eyesore but can also contribute to wider social issues, including antisocial behaviour. We will continue to take enforcement action as necessary to ensure our communities remain safe, clean, and welcoming for all residents.”

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Notes to Editors

For media enquiries, please contact the Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226 or email: communications@fenland.gov.uk