Code of Conduct

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Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL USERS

Noble Court Estate

Noble Court Estate is intended to provide an independent forum for information, discussion, scrutiny and commentary concerning matters affecting the Noble Court Estate community.

The website welcomes **robust debate, legitimate criticism, disagreement and scrutiny of decisions made by those responsible for the management and administration of the estate**.

However, freedom of expression does not provide a licence to harass, threaten, deliberately mislead or unlawfully target other individuals.

This Code sets out the standards expected of everyone who contributes to or uses this website.

1. Robust criticism is permitted

Users are entitled to express strong opinions and to criticise decisions, policies, proposals, communications, expenditure, management arrangements and the conduct of those acting in an official or representative capacity.

Disagreement with a director, the RMC, a management agent, contractor or other organisation is not, by itself, inappropriate conduct.

Criticism does not have to be complimentary, diplomatic or agreeable to others.

Provided that it is expressed lawfully and responsibly, **robust criticism is expressly permitted.**

2. Opinion is not presented as fact

Users are encouraged to distinguish clearly between:

- established facts;
- information obtained from documents or correspondence;
- reasonable conclusions or interpretations; and
- personal opinion or commentary.

Where a matter is disputed or cannot presently be established, contributors should make that clear.

Phrases such as *“in my opinion”*, *“it appears”*, *“I understand”* or *“the available information suggests”* may be appropriate where the underlying matter remains uncertain.

3. Accuracy matters

Contributors should make reasonable efforts to ensure that factual statements are accurate.

Noble Court Estate does not knowingly publish fabricated information or knowingly false factual allegations.

Where a genuine factual error is identified, the website may correct, qualify or remove the relevant material.

An honest mistake is not treated in the same way as deliberate fabrication or knowingly false publication.

4. Criticism of individuals acting in an official capacity

Individuals who hold positions of responsibility, including directors, officers, representatives, management agents and contractors, may properly be subject to scrutiny and criticism concerning matters connected with those roles.

This does not mean that personal attacks are encouraged.

The distinction is important:

Scrutiny of actions, decisions and conduct in an official capacity is legitimate. Personal abuse unrelated to those matters is not.

Nothing in this Code should be interpreted as preventing legitimate examination of how decisions have been made or how responsibilities have been discharged.

5. No harassment, threats or intimidation

The following are prohibited:

- threats of violence;
- threatening or intimidating communications;
- sustained personal harassment;
- deliberately abusive behaviour;
- attempts to intimidate contributors into abandoning legitimate criticism; and

- targeted campaigns intended to cause distress rather than contribute to legitimate discussion.

Disagreement, criticism and robust debate are not harassment merely because someone finds them uncomfortable or strongly disagrees with them.

6. Privacy and personal information

Users must not unnecessarily publish another person's private or sensitive information.

This includes, where inappropriate:

- private addresses;
- personal telephone numbers;
- private email addresses;
- financial information;
- identification documents;
- private correspondence;
- personal photographs; and
- other information capable of unnecessarily identifying or exposing an individual.

Where information is published for legitimate discussion, contributors should consider whether identifying individuals is genuinely necessary.

The existence of information does not automatically make publication of that information appropriate.

7. Documents and correspondence

Documents may be discussed where there is a legitimate public or community interest in their contents.

However, contributors should exercise care when reproducing correspondence or documents containing personal information, confidential information or information unrelated to the issue being discussed.

Where possible, unnecessary personal details should be removed or anonymised.

8. No deliberate misinformation

Users must not knowingly fabricate evidence, invent quotations, manufacture documents or deliberately present false information as genuine.

Similarly, users should not deliberately manipulate information in a manner intended to create a materially misleading impression.

Legitimate interpretation, criticism and disagreement are **not** regarded as misinformation simply because another person disputes the interpretation.

9. Allegations and disputed matters

Where a contributor raises an allegation concerning an individual or organisation, particular care should be taken to distinguish the allegation from an established fact.

Contributors should, where reasonably possible, identify the basis for significant factual assertions.

Noble Court Estate does not intend to become a platform for unsupported personal accusations.

Equally, **the existence of a dispute does not prevent the underlying issue from being discussed.**

10. No discrimination or hate speech

Content that promotes hatred, discrimination or hostility against individuals or groups on the basis of protected or other personal characteristics will not be permitted.

Robust criticism of decisions, organisations or conduct is not prohibited merely because it is strongly worded.

11. No manipulation of discussion

Users must not deliberately impersonate another person, manufacture apparent support, create false identities for deceptive purposes or otherwise manipulate discussion in a manner intended to mislead readers.

Users should not knowingly misrepresent the source of information.

12. Right of reply

Where appropriate, a person or organisation criticised on the website may be given an opportunity to respond.

A right of reply does not mean that Noble Court Estate is required to remove legitimate criticism simply because the subject of that criticism disagrees with it.

Disagreement with published commentary is not, of itself, evidence that the commentary is improper.

13. Moderation

Noble Court Estate reserves the right to moderate, edit, qualify or remove material where reasonably considered necessary to:

- comply with the law;
- protect personal privacy;
- prevent harassment or threats;
- correct significant factual inaccuracies;
- protect confidential information;
- prevent unlawful publication; or
- maintain the integrity and purpose of the website.

Moderation should not be interpreted as an indication that the website agrees with or disagrees with the underlying opinion.

14. No obligation to provide a platform for unlawful material

Noble Court Estate is not obliged to publish material merely because it has been submitted.

Material may be declined where its publication would create an unacceptable legal, privacy or security risk.

Where appropriate, contributors may instead be invited to reframe or substantiate their submission.

15. Responsibility of contributors

Every contributor remains responsible for material they submit.

Contributors should therefore consider carefully whether they can substantiate factual assertions and whether publication of particular personal information is necessary and justified.

Nothing on this website should be interpreted as providing immunity from the ordinary legal responsibilities associated with publishing material.

16. This Code does not suppress legitimate criticism

This is an important principle.

This Code is not intended to silence criticism of the RMC, its directors, management arrangements, contractors or other persons involved in the administration of Noble Court Estate.

Nor is it intended to require contributors to use artificially mild language when discussing matters they reasonably consider important.

A residential community has a legitimate interest in transparency, accountability, expenditure, governance, decision-making and the exercise of authority.

Legitimate scrutiny is therefore expressly protected.

The fact that criticism may be uncomfortable, embarrassing, strongly worded or unwelcome does not automatically make it inappropriate.

17. Fairness and proportionality

Users are encouraged to keep criticism relevant to the matter under discussion.

The strongest and most effective criticism is generally criticism that can be supported by documents, correspondence, decisions, published information or clearly identified opinion.

Personal abuse adds little to legitimate scrutiny and is therefore discouraged.

18. Governing principle

The guiding principle of Noble Court Estate is simple:

Question decisions. Examine evidence. Challenge information. Hold those exercising responsibility to account. Express opinions freely — but do so lawfully and responsibly.

Noble Court Estate supports open discussion and legitimate scrutiny.

It does not seek to prevent disagreement.

It seeks to ensure that disagreement remains **meaningful, evidence-based, proportionate and lawful.**

Important notice

This Code of Conduct is intended to establish editorial and community standards. It is not intended to constitute legal advice or to remove any legal rights or obligations that may apply to contributors or to Noble Court Estate.

Nothing in this Code prevents any person from raising a legitimate complaint, exercising a legal right, seeking independent legal advice or taking any other lawful action available to them.