ANNEX 7.7

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Our complaints policy.

We are committed to providing a high-quality legal service to all our clients. In the event of a problem, you have a legal right to complain and when something goes wrong, we need you to tell us about it. This will help us to improve our standards.

Our complaints procedure.

Our Client Care Partner Mr Paul Owen deals with all complaints. You can contact Mr Owen by writing to him at Machins Solicitors LLP, 295-299 High St, Berkhamsted, HP4 1AJ or by email at paul.owen@machins.co.uk.

When a complaint is received Mr Owen will undertake an investigation with the head of the department involved in your complaint. If the complaint is received verbally, we will usually ask you to confirm it in writing in order to avoid any confusion regarding the complaint being made.

What will happen next?

1. We will record your complaint in our central register and open a file for your complaint. We will do this on receipt of your complaint by the Client Care Partner.

2. We will send you a letter acknowledging your complaint (which we will aim to do within 2 – 3 working days of receipt) in appropriate cases asking you to confirm or explain the grounds for your complaint. We will confirm that we are investigating your complaint and that we will seek to provide a detailed response within 14 days.

3. A copy of your complaint will be sent to the Head of the department involved in your complaint. The Department Head will be asked to investigate the complaint and provide the Client Care Partner with a detailed report together with any recommendations.

4. When the Department Head's Report is received we will write to you with our detailed response to your complaint and any practical proposals we can make for dealing with it. In appropriate cases we may invite you to attend a face- to- face meeting to discuss your complaint.

5. If you are not happy with our response you can write to us again. We will then arrange for the complaint to be referred to the Managing Partner and/or one other partner from a different department. They will be provided with the complete file including details of your complaint; our response and any specific points you have raised on it. They will then review your complaint. They will do this within 14 days.

6. We will let you know the result of the review within 5 days of the end of the review. At this time we will write to you confirming our final position on your complaint and explaining our reasons. If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the Legal Ombudsman by writing to PO Box 6167, Slough, SL1 0EH or by email at enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk The Legal Ombudsman expects complaints to be made to them within one year of the date of the act or omission about which you are concerned or within one year of you realising that there was a concern. You must also refer concerns to the Legal Ombudsman within six months of our final response to you. For further information you should contact the Legal Ombudsman (telephone number: 0300 555 0333) or refer to the Legal Ombudsman website at www.legalombudsman.org.uk.

7. If we have any change of the timescales above, we will let you know and explain why.