

ADMINISTRATIVE PANEL DECISION

Shepherd Building Group Limited v. qing zhang
Case No. D2026-0502

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Shepherd Building Group Limited, United Kingdom, represented by Addleshaw Goddard, United Kingdom ("UK").

The Respondent is qing zhang, China.

2. The Domain Name and Registrar

The disputed domain name <shepherddevelopments.com> is registered with Dynadot Inc (the "Registrar").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on February 5, 2026. On February 6, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registrar a request for registrar verification in connection with the disputed domain name. On February 9, 2026, the Registrar transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the disputed domain name which differed from the named Respondent (REDACTED FOR PRIVACY, Super Privacy Service LTD c/o Dynadot) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on February 9, 2026, providing the registrant and contact information disclosed by the Registrar, and inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on February 14, 2026.

The Center verified that the Complaint together with the amended Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Policy" or "UDRP"), the Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Rules"), and the WIPO Supplemental Rules for Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (the "Supplemental Rules").

In accordance with the Rules, paragraphs 2 and 4, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint, and the proceedings commenced on February 16, 2026. In accordance with the Rules, paragraph 5, the due date for Response was March 8, 2026. The Respondent did not submit any response. Accordingly, the Center notified the Respondent's default on March 9, 2026.

The Center appointed Lorenz Ehrler as the sole panelist in this matter on March 16, 2026. The Panel finds that it was properly constituted. The Panel has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Rules, paragraph 7.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant forms part of the Shepherd Group which is mainly known for its activities in the construction sector. Notably, the Shepherd Group was one of the largest privately owned building contractors in the UK before it sold that part of its business in 2015. The group is also active in other fields related to the building sector such as building services, engineering and modular building infrastructure.

The Complainant holds various UK and European Union trademarks, namely:

- UK trademark SHEPHERD GROUP, reg. No. UK0002431741A, registered on December 19, 2008, in classes 12, 35-39, 42;
- UK trademark SHEPHERD GROUP, reg. No.. UK0002431741B, registered on October 12, 2007, in classes 5-7, 9, 11, 19, 20, 40, 43-45
- European Union trademark SHEPHERD GROUP, reg. No. 005842604, registered on February 29, 2008, in classes 5-7, 9, 11, 12, 19, 20, 35-40, 42-45.

The disputed domain name was registered on April 11, 2025. It resolves to a website which replicates the website of a company of the Shepherd Group that was dissolved in 2025, namely Shepherd Developments Company Limited.

5. Parties' Contentions

A. Complainant

The Complainant contends that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar to its SHEPHERD GROUP trademarks. It stresses the fact that the additional elements "developments" as well as the generic Top Level Domain ("gTLD") ".com" are not relevant to assess the risk of confusion.

Furthermore, the Complainant states that the Respondent is not affiliated or related to it in any way, and that it did not authorize the Respondent to use the trademark in question. The Complainant considers that the Respondent is not entitled to use the sign SHEPHERD in the disputed domain name, which resolves to a website that impersonates the Shepherd Developments Company Limited, an affiliate of the Complainant that was dissolved in 2025, and contains a link to an e-shop offering paraphernalia for cannabis consumers.

Lastly, the Complainant contends that the Respondent uses the disputed domain name and the website it resolves to in bad faith, by promoting a third-party website selling drug paraphernalia under the appearance of a company which in the past belonged to the Shepherd Group.

B. Respondent

The Respondent did not reply to the Complainant's contentions.

6. Discussion and Findings

According to paragraph 4(a) of the Policy, the Complainant must prove that:

- (i) the disputed domain name registered by the Respondent is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark or service mark in which the Complainant has rights; and

- (ii) the Respondent has no rights or legitimate interests in respect of the disputed domain name; and
- (iii) the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

A. Identical or Confusingly Similar

The trademarks put forward by the Complainant demonstrate that the Complainant has rights in SHEPHERD GROUP.

Under the UDRP, the requirement under paragraph 4(a) of the Policy requires the disputed domain name to be identical or confusingly similar to the Complainant's trademarks. There is no requirement of similarity of goods and/or services.

The existence of confusing similarity within the meaning of paragraph 4(a) of the Policy is not in doubt in the present case, given that the dominant element of the Complainant's trademark SHEPHERD GROUP is recognizable within the disputed domain name. The incorporation of the dominant feature of a trademark is typically sufficient to establish that a disputed domain name is identical or confusingly similar to a trademark (WIPO Overview of WIPO Panel Views on Select UDRP Questions "[WIPO Overview 3.1](#)", section 1.7).

As far as the gTLD ".com" is concerned, this element has a technical function and therefore is typically not taken into account when assessing the issue of identity or confusing similarity.

The Panel thus finds that the disputed domain name is confusingly similar with the Complainant's trademark SHEPHERD GROUP.

The Panel finds the first element of the Policy has been established.

B. Rights or Legitimate Interests

The Complainant contends that the Respondent does not have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name, in particular that the Respondent has not at any time been commonly known by the disputed domain name and that the Respondent is not making legitimate use of said disputed domain name. The Complainant clearly states that it has not granted the Respondent any rights to use its trademarks.

By not submitting any response to the Complaint, the Respondent failed to invoke any circumstance that might demonstrate, pursuant to paragraph 4(c) of the Policy, that it holds any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names (*Ahead Software AG v. Leduc Jean*, WIPO Case No. [D2004-0323](#); see also, *Nintendo of America, Inc., v. Tasc, Inc. and Ken Lewis*, WIPO Case No. [D2000-1563](#) (finding that respondent's default was sufficient to conclude that it had no rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain names)).

Furthermore, the Complainant rightly points out that the use to which the Respondent puts the disputed domain, namely for impersonating a former affiliate of the Complainant to convey the impression that the website is operated or sponsored by the Complainant is all the contrary of a bona fide use (*Ingenico Group v. Sammi Wilhi, Lng Group Pty Ltd*, WIPO Case No. [D2019-1079](#)). Where the respondent demonstrably uses the domain name in bad faith, it is obvious that it does not have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name ([WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 2.15).

Accordingly, the Panel finds that the Complainant has shown that the Respondent does not have any rights or legitimate interests in the disputed domain name.

The Panel finds the second element of the Policy has been established.

C. Registered and Used in Bad Faith

Paragraph 4(a)(iii) of the Policy provides that the Complainant must, in addition to the matters set out above, demonstrate that the disputed domain name has been registered and is being used in bad faith.

The undisputed prima facie evidence establishes that the Respondent is not affiliated with the Complainant and has no license or other authorisation to use the Complainant's trademark.

The Respondent registered the disputed domain name well after the Complainant's trademark was in use. The Panel finds that the Respondent should have known about the Complainant's trademark and business when registering the disputed domain name. This Panel considers that the disputed domain name for itself is a strong indication that the Respondent was aware of the Complainant's trademark SHEPHERD GROUP, as it seems more than unlikely that the Respondent would have created – randomly – the disputed domain name that is not only confusingly similar with the Complainant's distinctive trademark (*cf. Motul v. Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0138693539 / Konstantin Speranskii*, WIPO Case No. [D2016-2632](#)), but is actually identical with the company name of a former affiliate of the Complainant. The conclusion that the Respondent registered the disputed domain in bad faith imposes itself even more when considering that the disputed domain name resolves to a website that clearly impersonates the affiliate in question, Shepherd Developments Company Limited.

The Complainant rightly submits that the impersonating nature of the website to which the disputed domain name resolves leads to the conclusion that the disputed domain name not only has been registered, but is being used in bad faith, all the more that the replication of the Shepherd Developments Company Limited's website is used to promote a third-party website offering drug paraphernalia for sale and thus trades on the aforementioned company's and thus the Complainant's group's reputation. [WIPO Overview 3.1](#), section 3.2.1.

This Panel therefore holds the view that the disputed domain name was registered and used in bad faith.

The Complainant therefore finds that the third element of the Policy has been established.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraphs 4(i) of the Policy and 15 of the Rules, the Panel orders that the disputed domain name <shepherddevelopments.com> be transferred to the Complainant.

/Lorenz Ehrler/

Lorenz Ehrler

Sole Panelist

Date: March 25, 2026