



DISPUTE RESOLUTION SERVICE DECISION

Laura Ashley IP Holdings LLC v. Muammad Ahmad
Case No. DUK2026-0025

1. The Parties

The Complainant is Laura Ashley IP Holdings LLC, United States of America, represented by Burges Salmon LLP, United Kingdom.

The Respondent is Muammad Ahmad, United Kingdom.

2. The Domain Name and Registry

The Registry of the disputed domain name <lauraliving.co.uk> (the "Domain Name") is Nominet UK ("Nominet" or the "Registry").

3. Procedural History

The Complaint was filed with the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center (the "Center") on August 4, 2026. On August 4, 2026, the Center transmitted by email to the Registry a request for registry verification in connection with the Domain Name. On August 7, 2026, the Registry transmitted by email to the Center its verification response disclosing registrant and contact information for the Domain Name which differed from the named Respondent (Unknown) and contact information in the Complaint. The Center sent an email communication to the Complainant on August 10, 2026, inviting the Complainant to submit an amendment to the Complaint. The Complainant filed an amended Complaint on August 11, 2026.

The Center verified that the Complaint satisfied the formal requirements of the Dispute Resolution Service (the "Policy" or "DRS Policy").

In accordance with the Policy, paragraphs 3 and 6, the Center formally notified the Respondent of the Complaint on August 12, 2026. In accordance with the Policy, paragraph 7, the due date for Response was September 3, 2026. The Center received email communications from an email address related to the Domain Name on August 12, September 2, and September 9, 2026.

In accordance with the Policy, paragraph 9, the due date for the Complainant's Reply was September 9, 2026. The Complainant submitted a Reply on September 9, 2026.

The Parties were sent to mediation on September 9, 2026. The Registry confirmed the mediation was unsuccessful on September 15, 2026.

The Complainant paid the fee for an expert decision on September 24, 2026.

The Center appointed Tim Brown as the Expert in this matter on October 5, 2026. The Expert has submitted the Statement of Acceptance and Declaration of Impartiality and Independence, as required by the Center to ensure compliance with the Policy, paragraph 15.

4. Factual Background

The Complainant is Laura Ashley IP Holdings LLC, a Delaware limited liability company with an address in New York, United States of America. It is the owner of the brand LAURA ASHLEY.

The LAURA ASHLEY brand has been in use since 1953 and relates to the production and sale of fabrics, clothing and home and products. The Complainant's business entered administration in 2020, and the brand is now used through licensing arrangements. Homewares are sold in the United Kingdom under the LAURA ASHLEY brand primarily through the Complainant's retail partner, Next plc, and through Next's Laura Ashley website.

The Respondent is Muammad Ahmad, an individual located in London, United Kingdom. The Domain Name was registered on May 12, 2026.

The Domain Name resolves to a website with the HTML title tag "Now Live Laura Ashley 2026 Collections for UK Shoppers" and a logo of the stylised words "LAURA ASHLEY / SINCE 2002". The website features sections including "Bedding Collection", "Kids Bedding", "Duvet Covers", "Curtains Collection" and others. These sections feature products, such as bedding with titles such as "LAURA ASHLEY BEDDING / Antares Printed Duvet Cover Set by Laura Ashley"

The website has descriptive content under headings including "Now Live: Laura Ashley living 2026 Collection for UK and USA Shoppers", "LauraAshley [sic.] 2026 Collection" and "Dresses for Women's" [sic.]

The website has a section titled "Our Brand", which notes:

Our Brand Both our stores have been serving the UK and USA customers for the past 10 years and are offering their latest products to the customer at discounted prices which are made with premium quality and very. beautifully. There is no doubt that laura ashley is a premium UK and USA brand which is known for its name and quality.

The website footer makes note of a limited company, namely LAURA ASHLEY & ERCOLE LTD, which is registered in England and Wales under company number 17000193. The footer also has a copyright notice "Copyright @ 2026 Laura Ashley living. All rights reserved."

The Respondent did not file a formal response to proceedings. However, three emails were sent to the Center. These emails were replies to the Center's notice of proceedings and were addressed from an individual named "Maria", with an email signature noting a limited company, namely "Laura Living Studio LTD" and the URL "lauraliving.co.uk". As no formal submissions were made, Nominet's Declaration was not signed.

Some discussion of the identity of the Respondent follows below. For present purposes it is noted the Parties have been involved in a previous dispute under the DRS, namely *Laura Ashley IP Holdings LLC and Muammad Ahmad*, DRS D00029139, which related to the domain name <lauraashleybedding.co.uk>.

In that case the expert held that the Complainant had Rights in the name LAURA ASHLEY which was similar to the domain name and that the Respondent's registration and use of the domain name was an Abusive Registration.

4.1. Identity of the Respondent

Before outlining the Parties' contentions, it is necessary to consider the identity of the Respondent.

The Domain Name was initially registered using a WHOIS privacy service. During the administrative procedure, the privacy service was lifted and the registrant given as Muammad Ahmad, with an address in London, United Kingdom.

As noted in the Factual Background, the Respondent did not submit a formal response but sent three emails to the Center. The first two were signed "Maria, Laura Living Studio LTD". In the third, the sender stated that "lauraashleybedding.co.uk is not our domain, and we have never owned or operated it. Our only website is lauraliving.co.uk."

The submissions and emails before the Expert do not make it clear who "Maria" is. A number of companies are also named, variously in the email signatures and on the website associated with the Domain Name.

The Dispute Resolution Service – [Experts' Overview](#) ("the Experts' Overview" or "the Overview") is a useful guide to the DRS and its operation, and it can be found on Nominet's website. Paragraph 5.10 sets out the limited circumstances in which an Expert may make their own enquiries. The Expert has consulted the Companies House database and notes that the limited company listed on the website, that is LAURA ASHLEY & ERCOLE LTD, has Muammad Ahmad listed as a current director.

There is therefore a link between the operator of the website and the registrant named in the WHOIS. If the two were unconnected, it is difficult to see why LAURA ASHLEY & ERCOLE LTD would be named in the website's footer.

The emails from "Maria" are non-standard submissions. They are not accompanied by the Declaration required by paragraph 7.3.6 of the Policy, and they come from a person or entity whose connection with the registrant is not explained. The Expert gives them very limited weight. For completeness and transparency, and in the interests of justice, the Expert has nonetheless set out their substance below.

5. Parties' Contentions

The Parties' contentions are set out below. For convenience, the Expert has combined the Complainant contentions contained within its initial submission and its reply.

5.1. Complainant – Rights

The Complainant contends that it has Rights in respect of a name or mark which is identical or similar to the Domain Name per paragraph 2.1.1 of the Policy.

The Complainant says that it is the proprietor of the undernoted trade marks:

United Kingdom Trade Mark Registration No. UK00001231150 for the mark LAURA ASHLEY, registered on May 25, 1990, covering goods and services in Classes 2, 3, 11, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, including (among others) sofas and armchairs, cushions and pillows, lampshades, wallpaper, various textiles for home furnishings, and other home goods.

United Kingdom Trade Mark Registration No. UK00002455750 for the mark LAURA ASHLEY, registered on February 29, 2008, covering goods and services in Classes 3, 4, 9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 41, including (among others) bed linen, fabrics, bed covers, pillowcases, quilts, furniture, curtains, and online retail services connected with home furnishings.

An extract of the registration from the UK IPO database for UK00001231150 has been exhibited. An extract for UK00002455750 has not been exhibited, with an extract for UK00900202408 being substituted instead.

The Complainant also says it has acquired substantial goodwill and reputation in the LAURA ASHLEY name through decades of continuous and extensive use in the United Kingdom.

The Complainant contends that the Domain Name incorporates the name "Laura", which it says is the first element of the Complainant's well-known LAURA ASHLEY mark, together with the descriptive term "living". The Complainant avers that "living" is a term closely associated with the home furnishings, home décor and lifestyle sectors in which the Complainant has traded for many decades.

The Complainant says the Respondent's selection of the Domain Name is not coincidental, and it is plainly not a reference to an unrelated individual but forms part of a deliberate attempt to evoke the Complainant and its goodwill.

The Complainant contends Internet users encountering the Domain Name are likely to understand the term "Laura" as a reference to the Complainant and to assume that the Domain Name is connected with, authorised by, or endorsed by the Complainant, where it is not. The Complainant avers the addition of the descriptive term "living" does not dispel that association.

Finally, the Complainant says the ".co.uk" suffix is to be disregarded for purposes of comparison, as it is a standard top-level domain designation.

5.2. Complainant – Abusive Registration

The Complainant contends that the Domain Name, in the hands of the Respondent, is an Abusive Registration, relying on the following headings.

5.2.1. The Domain Name was registered to take unfair advantage of the Complainant's Rights

The Complainant says the registrant details for the Domain Name are the same as those for <lauraashleybedding.co.uk>, which was transferred to the Complainant in DRS D00029139. The earlier website linked to pages at <lauraliving.co.uk>, used <lauraliving.co.uk> contact details and referred to "Laura Ashley living".

The Complainant says the registration therefore cannot realistically be regarded as independent or coincidental and forms part of a continuing scheme to exploit its goodwill. It says "Lauraliving" was chosen to suggest a Laura Ashley sub-brand while avoiding the full name. In its Reply it adds that the Domain Name was registered on May 12, 2026, six days after notification of the complaint in the earlier case, which supports the inference that the registration continued the same conduct.

5.2.2. The Domain Name is being used in a manner that is unfairly detrimental to the Complainant's Rights

The Complainant says the website at the Domain Name is a clone of the website previously operated from <lauraashleybedding.co.uk> and relies on that expert's finding that the respondent there went to great lengths to position its website as operated by the Complainant or an authorised retailer. It says the website creates a likelihood of confusion, including initial interest confusion, within paragraph 5.1.2, because it:

- reproduces LAURA ASHLEY throughout and sells home goods of the kind for which the Complainant is known;
- describes itself as the “official website” and the only authorised platform for genuine Laura Ashley products;
- uses “we” of the Laura Ashley brand, tells the Complainant’s brand history, and names “Laura Ashley, Inc.” as operator in its privacy policy;
- refers in its footer to “Laura Ashley Urban”, “Laura Ashley Home Ltd” and “Laura Ashley & Ercole Ltd”, which the Complainant says either do not exist or have no connection with it; and
- offers third-party mass-market goods “re-badged” as Laura Ashley products, and listings for three genuine Laura Ashley products using the Complainant’s images and text copied from Next’s website, without authority.

The Complainant also says the website offers goods competing with its own. It says it is unclear whether the site genuinely sells goods or is a phishing exercise, and that either way visitors are harmed and the harm is attributed to its brand.

5.2.3 The Respondent has no legitimate interest in the Domain Name

While the concept of “legitimate interest” is a part of the UDRP Policy, rather than the DRS, the Complainant says the Respondent has no connection with it, no licence or authorisation, no corresponding trade mark rights, and is not commonly known by the Domain Name, and that there is no plausible basis on which it could have arrived at the name independently. In its Reply, it says the incorporation of Laura Living Studio Ltd confers no right to use a name confusingly similar to its marks and, it says, post-dates both its Rights and the registration of the Domain Name. It says the Respondent has not explained why the name was chosen, answered the clone allegation or engaged with paragraph 8, and asks the Expert to draw inferences under paragraph 24.8.

5.2.4 The Respondent is engaged in a pattern of registrations

The Complainant says the two domain names, registered in the same name, form a pattern of registrations targeting its brand within paragraph 5.1.3, and should not be viewed in isolation.

5.3. Respondent – Rights

The Respondent’s non-standard response remains silent regarding Rights.

5.4. Respondent – Abusive Registration

The contentions below are taken from three emails sent to the Center. The Respondent contends that the Domain Name is not an Abusive Registration.

The emails say that “Laura Living” is its own company, with its own domain, logo, branding and products. It is building a small online store in the UK under its own business, company, brand name, logo, products and website. It says it has provided a UK limited company certificate for Laura Living Studio LTD as evidence of a legitimate business registration.

The email narrates that there has not been an intent to target, copy, impersonate or harm another brand, and has no reason or intention to copy another brand or benefit from someone else’s reputation. The name “Laura Living” was chosen as its own name for its UK business and is not intended to target or impersonate any other brand.

The emails’ author says that <lauraashleybedding.co.uk> is not its domain, and it has never owned or operated it. Its only website is <lauraliving.co.uk>.

The emails conclude that the Complaint is incorrect and unfounded, affects its legitimate business and domain, and should be reviewed and closed.

6. Discussion and Findings

This dispute has been brought before Dispute Resolution Service (the “DRS”). The DRS is an administrative mechanism designed to resolve issues relating to domain names registered in the .uk space. The DRS is defined by the DRS Policy, which can be found on Nominet’s website.

To bring about a transfer of a contested domain name, a complainant must demonstrate, on the balance of probabilities, two things. These are defined under paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 of the DRS Policy.

Firstly, a complainant must show it has Rights in respect of a name or mark which is identical or similar to the domain name under dispute.

Secondly, a complainant must show that the domain name, in the hands of the respondent, is an Abusive Registration as defined in paragraph 1 of the DRS Policy.

The Expert discusses each of these branches as they apply to the current matter below.

6.1. Rights

The Complainant relies on two United Kingdom trade mark registrations, namely UK00001231150 and UK00002455750. An extract of the registration from the UK IPO database for UK00001231150 has been exhibited. An extract for UK00002455750 has not been exhibited, with an extract for UK00900202408 being substituted instead.

This is a minor oversight but for certainty the Expert has conducted his own searches of the UK IPO database for all the marks noted by the Complainant.

It is clear that the Complainant has rights in the term LAURA ASHLEY that pre-date the registration of the Domain Name by many years.

The “.co.uk” suffix can be disregarded for the purposes of the comparing the Domain Name to the Complainant’s mark. Therefore, the Expert must compare the relevant elements of the Domain Name, “laura living”, and the Complainant’s mark, LAURA ASHLEY.

The Expert has referred to paragraph 2.3 of the Overview which asks, “What is meant by “identical or similar” in paragraph 2.1.1 of the Policy?” and observes:

“The wording of the Policy is broader and less restrictive [than the UDRP], which matches the reality that the first hurdle (i.e. proving the existence of rights in a relevant name or mark) is intended to be a relatively low-level test. Issues relating to confusion are best addressed under the second hurdle.”

The Domain Name and the mark are not particularly similar. However, the Expert takes the view that the use of the word “Laura” is significant. As set out in its contentions, the Complainant’s brand is well known and has been in the public eye since the 1950’s. In the area of homewares and women’s fashion, it is likely that the word “Laura” would be associated to some degree with the Complainant’s name and mark. The adornment, “Living”, does not detract from the similarity, especially given the Complainant’s use of the mark for home furnishings.

Referring to the Overview, the Expert notes that the Rights element of the Policy is a low threshold test and confusion is best addressed under the Abusive Registration element. This is particularly important, given the use to which the Domain Name has been put and the lack of any contentions relating to the choice of “Laura” in the Domain Name.

The Expert therefore finds that the Complainant has established, on the balance of probabilities, that it has Rights in respect of a name or mark which are identical or similar to the Domain Name.

6.2. Abusive Registration

The Complainant has said that the Domain Name was registered to take unfair advantage of the Complainant’s Rights and has been used in a manner that is unfairly detrimental to those Rights and that the Respondent has no legitimate interest in the Domain Name. The Complainant also avers that the Respondent has engaged in a pattern of Abusive Registrations.

The former contentions fit within Paragraphs 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.2 of the Policy. Paragraph 5.1.1.3 notes that a domain name may be an Abusive Registration if it was registered for the purpose of unfairly disrupting the business of the Complainant. Paragraph 5.1.2 says a domain name can be an Abusive Registration if there are circumstances indicating that the Respondent is using or threatening to use the Domain Name in a way which has confused or is likely to confuse people or businesses into believing that the Domain Name is registered to, operated or authorised by, or otherwise connected with the Complainant

Having reviewed the website to which the Domain Name resolves, it is clear that the contents are deliberately misleading and confusing and that this will unfairly disrupt the business of the Complainant.

The Domain Name has an HTML title tag “Now Live Laura Ashley 2026 Collections for UK Shoppers” and a logo of the stylised words “LAURA ASHLEY / SINCE 2002”. Many products on the site have titles such as “LAURA ASHLEY BEDDING / Antares Printed Duvet Cover Set by Laura Ashley”. The website has descriptive content under headings including “Now Live: Laura Ashley living 2026 Collection for UK and USA Shoppers” and “LauraAshley [sic.] 2026 Collection”.

It is very clear that the Respondent has targeted the Complainant’s brand. The non-standard submissions are a flat denial of the Complainant’s contentions and give no reasonable explanation for using the Complainant’s name and mark on its website.

The Expert therefore finds the Domain Name is an Abusive Registration per Paragraphs 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.2 of the Policy.

Turning briefly to the Complainant’s contention that the Domain Name is part of a pattern of Abusive Registrations. The Expert notes that the Respondent has been party to a similar dispute, namely *Laura Ashley IP Holdings LLC and Muammad Ahmad*, DRS D00029139. In the Expert’s view, a single previous dispute does not form a pattern. The Expert has referred to paragraph 3.5 of the Overview. In discussing what makes a pattern it notes:

“If the domain name in issue is a well-known trade mark of the Complainant and there is no obvious justification for the Respondent being in possession of the domain name, it is probable that the Complaint will succeed on other grounds.”

That is the case here. While there is not a significant pattern, the Complaint succeeds on other grounds.

The Expert therefore finds that the Domain Name in the hands of the Respondent is an Abusive Registration.

7. Decision

For the foregoing reasons, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Policy, the Expert orders that the Domain Name <lauraliving.co.uk> be transferred to the Complainant.

Tim Brown

Expert

Date: October 13, 2026