

Dunbar flat owner wins appeal to carry on using it as a short term let

A Dunbar flat owner has won an appeal to carry on using it as a short term let after councillors ruled the stone stairs leading to its door were 'quieter' than wooden ones.

The owner of the first floor property on the town's High Street had been refused permission to use it as a holiday let by East Lothian Council planners who said it was 'harmful to the amenity' of other residents in the building.

However their decision was overturned on appeal this week after the local authority's Local Review Body members visited the address and found just nine stone steps leading to its door.

Councillor Donna Collins said: "What I noticed was that the first nine stairs were stone and going up to the second floor it was wood. If it had been the other way around and we were determining on the flat above I would have had a definite 'no no' as they were quite loud going up, but the stone ones only have nine steps to the front door."

And she said the flat was only being used as a short term holiday let occasionally during the year with the applicant staying there as well and using it as their home.

She said: "This one is quite unique in that the occupant is living there for some weeks and letting it out. On that basis I would think the applicant will be more careful about who they are letting it out to."

Councillor Andy Forrest supported planning officers view that the noise caused by regular guests coming and going in the flat would have an impact on the amenity of other residents.

He said: "I think it is the general noise rather than antisocial behaviour that is a problem for me."

However Councillor Liz Allan, who chaired the review body meeting yesterday, agreed with Councillor Collins and pointed out there were no ground floor residents in the building which was above a High Street business.

Councillor Allan said: "Because of the design, the other flats are not going to be affected by whoever is in that flat. It is the owner using it the majority of the time so it is not as if we are losing a flat which could be a permanent home.

"I do believe when it is your home you are more careful about who you let in."

The review body upheld the appeal granting the change of use for the property by two votes to one.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter