

Musselburgh Airbnb owner's bid to keep operating rejected

The owner of an Airbnb used by golfers from around the world has lost his bid to have it declared lawful by East Lothian planners.

The second floor flat in Musselburgh has been operating since 2018 in New Street.

But an application by the owner for a Certificate of Lawfulness, which avoids it requiring planning permission, has been rejected by planning officers.

Agents for the owner had claimed that the use of the flat as a short term let was not a material change of use to if it was being used by long term residents.

However planners disagreed saying: "As the flat is advertised on holiday rental platforms, coupled with the frequency of the arrival and departures of guests at various times and the movements associated with the changeovers and cleaning between guest stays, this would lead to a movement pattern which is different to that of a flat in use as a principal residence.

"Based on this information, it is considered that the use of the applicant's second floor flat for short term holiday let accommodation constitutes a material change of use, requiring planning permission, where a lawful use cannot otherwise be demonstrated."

The owner of the property's agents said it had a ban on under-25s staying and welcomed guests from around the world.

They said: "The property is primarily occupied by tourists visiting the area, including golfers from around the world. It is consistently booked and has an average booking duration of three days.

"The occupancy levels are around 70%, and the property is managed with strict screening processes, allowing only guests aged 25 and above and verified guests on Airbnb. There are no sofa beds or third-party bookings allowed."

No objections to the application were received by planners.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter