

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am writing to formally appeal the recent refusal of planning permission for a balcony on the rear flat roof of my property at 1 Pitt street. The decision notice dated 22/12/2023 cited concerns about overlooking and potential privacy issues for neighbouring properties.

Addressing Privacy Concerns:

While I acknowledge these concerns, I believe they are unfounded due to the proposed features of the balcony:

- Satin glass screen:** This screen will obstruct direct views into neighbouring properties while still allowing natural light, enhancing privacy for both myself and them.
- Existing elevation difference:** My property sits significantly higher than the northern properties (built approximately 130cm lower). This existing difference already creates overlooking, rendering concerns about the balcony irrelevant.
- Precedent & Knowledge:** The current residents purchased their properties with full knowledge of this elevation difference and potential overlooking. Additionally, their original gardens offered minimal privacy barriers, suggesting acceptance of some visibility.
- Southern property view:** While I have an unobstructed view from my bedroom window, the balcony offers only a partial view. Any concerns should have been raised during the construction of the Dormer extension (1975), which significantly altered their garden layout and privacy dynamics. Their purchase of the property with existing overlooking potential strengthens this point.

Addressing Noise & Lighting Concerns:

The concerns about noise and lighting in the decision notice also seem unsubstantiated:

- No noise generation:** The balcony has no mechanical components and is intended for quiet personal use. Noise levels won't exceed typical garden activities.
- No lighting planned:** No lights are currently installed or planned for the balcony.

Neighbour Feedback:

While gathering feedback, most Neighbours were positive, with only one or two exceptions:

- A northern neighbour expressed property devaluation concerns despite finding the new view aesthetically pleasing.
- A southern neighbour with a history of negativity claimed they would object regardless of the circumstances.

Personal Circumstances:

My wife's work at a school exposes us to regular Covid risks. Due to my COPD and history of a heart attack, I'm classified as clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV). The balcony along with the upstairs bedroom would provide a safe isolation space during potential Covid exposures.

Conclusion:

The proposed balcony with its privacy screen would not negatively impact neighbours and significantly enhance my quality of life while providing a safe isolation space.

I kindly request a thorough review of my appeal and a fair reassessment of the merits of the application.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ray Ellis