

Chief Executive's Office

Local Government Ombudsman
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Corporate Complaints

And by email to p.moriarty@lgo.org.uk

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Mr Tony Redmond
Ombudsman

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30 October 2009

www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

My Referece: L/OMB/1-31255625/RD
Your Ref: 08 002912/PBM
Enquiries to: Ruth Dowden

Dear Mr Redmond

Complaint by Mr & Mrs Lehmann of Flat 3, 24 Narrow Street London E14 8DQ

Further to your letter dated 6 August 2009, I am writing to provide you with the Council's considered response to the report on this case. Much of our position was set out in the letter previously sent to Paul Conroy [see attached] so I will not repeat the content here.

Detailed consideration has been given to the report and the issues raised therein. Nevertheless, and as set out in earlier correspondence, the Council does not believe that if appropriate consultation had taken place, the outcome would have been different in terms of planning permission.

Attached for your information is a report to be placed for consideration before the Strategic Development Committee on 10 November 2009. Mr & Mrs Lehmann have been provided with a copy of the report and informed of the meeting.

Balconies are commonplace on these riverside properties and the Council's policy is to encourage them because they add amenity in a flatted environment. As the Monitoring Officer pointed out to Paul, in our borough where there is a shortage of green space this is critical for our residents generally. In fact, Mr and Mrs Lehman benefit from one themselves.

On this particular site a screening option would have been unlikely to have been accepted due to the inevitable impact on views from both properties. However, window treatments may prove to be the best option. Such treatments allow an unimpeded view from inside the

property but prevent anyone outside from looking in, and can be achieved at relatively low cost.

In consideration of the remedy, it is the view of the Council that a window treatment would afford the privacy sought.

The Council has in exceptional cases considered payment for loss of opportunity and is willing to pay £500 in this case.

We would also agree to pay the suggested £300 for time and trouble.

Procedures have been improved to ensure that site visits are always recorded and, where appropriate, photographs retained on file. The revised case officer's report template is enclosed for your information.

Once Members have considered the attached report, the Monitoring Officer will provide a further update.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Dowden
Corporate Complaints Manager

Cc Kevan Collins – Chief Executive
Isabella Freeman - Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)
Aman Dalvi – Corporate Director (Development and Renewal)