

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 February 2017

by Cullum J A Parker BA(Hons) MA MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 6th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/D/17/3168477
14 Grange Yard, London SE1 3AQ

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs Putnam against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref 16/AP/3333, dated 15 August 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 November 2016.
 - The development proposed is described as '*The erection of external spiral stairs & balconies at rear to Mezzanine and first floor levels, with insertion of door and window units (matching existing) to elevation. On side elevation insertion of door units at Mezzanine and First floor levels with small balconies. To front elevation insertion of window at First floor level and door unit at Mezzanine level matching existing) with small balcony over entrance.*'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the locality.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises a 3 storey end-of-terrace property which was formerly used as a factory or warehouse. To the rear of the building, the elevation is relatively plain in appearance, with very few openings or structures attached to it. More widely, there are a number of new buildings within the locality; and many of these have balconies as part of their design.
 4. The appellant is seeking a number of changes detailed in the description above and within the officer's report in order to alter the use of various existing rooms. To support these internal changes, the appellant seeks the insertion of a number of openings in the rear elevation, including both doors and windows at first and second floor levels. However, the number of openings proposed would be at odds with the rest of the elevation along the rear of the terrace. Indeed, the introduction of the number of openings would be directly at odds with the relatively austere rear elevation of the terrace, by introducing a visually noisy rear elevation.
 5. These windows and doors would be served by spiral staircases and balconies. The appellant considers that these changes are necessary to provide fire
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escapes for the internal changes. However, it is unclear as to why balconies area of the size proposed would be needed to serve such a purpose. In practice, the size of the balcony platforms, together with a large area of screening proposed and the overall clutter proposed to the rear of the building would result in a development completely at odds with the prevailing pattern of development along the rear of this terrace.

6. Whilst I note that there are other balconies within the locality, these appear to be part of the overall design of those properties, whereas those proposed in this case would be as a result of later additions which fail to respect the character or appearance of the host building. I also note that there are openings and balconies proposed on the front/side elevation. However, these appear intrinsically linked to the overall scheme so I do not consider that a split decision in this case would be appropriate.
7. I therefore conclude that the proposed development would have a materially harmful impact on the character and appearance of the locality. Accordingly, it would be contrary to Policies 7.4 and 7.6 of the *London Plan* 2015, Policies 3.2, 3.12 and 3.13 of the *Southwark Plan* 2007, Policies SP12 and SP13 of the *Southwark Core Strategy* 2011, which, amongst other aims, seek to ensure that alterations to existing buildings embody a creative and high quality appropriate design solutions. It would also conflict with the Policies of the *National Planning Policy Framework* which include that planning should always seek high quality design and that it is proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.
8. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Cullum J A Parker

INSPECTOR