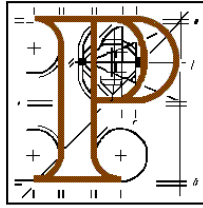


An Bord Pleanála



Inspector's Report

Appeal Reference No: PL29N.245733

Development: Conversion of existing attic space to study with construction of associated dormer windows to side and rear of roof at No. 143 Iveragh Road, Whitehall, Dublin 9.

Planning Application

Planning Authority: Dublin City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.: WEB1275/15
Applicant: Bernadette Dolan
Planning Authority Decision: Refuse permission

Planning Appeal

Appellant(s): Bernadette Dolan
Type of Appeal: First party
Observers: None
Date of Site Inspection: 9th February 2016

Inspector: Donal Donnelly

1.0 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The appeal site is located on Iveragh Road in Whitehall approximately 3.7km north of Dublin City Centre. Iveragh Road is within a 1930's housing estate (Gaeltacht Park) situated south of Collins Avenue West (R103) and west of Swords Road (N1). The estate has a regular layout with roads radiating from a central green area. Iveragh Road forms an outer circle connecting all radial roads.
- 1.2 Houses within the overall estate are semi-detached or terraced units with similar design comprising hip-ends, double height bay windows, brick finish at ground level and dashed upper level. Some dwelling have been altered over time to include side extensions and dormers.
- 1.3 No. 143 Iveragh Road is a 2-storey semi-detached dwelling located within a convex curve on the road. The dwelling faces north-east and its southern elevation is visible when approaching from the south. The dwelling has a stated area of 100.4 sq.m. and the site area is given as 202.5 sq.m.

2.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 2.1 The proposed development comprises of the following main elements:
 - Conversion of attic space to study;
 - Stated floor area of converted attic is 19.9 sq.m.;
 - Construction of associated dormer windows to side and rear of existing roof.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 0127/00

- 3.1 Permission granted for garage and vehicular access.

- 3.2 The following cases relate to nearby sites:

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 3472/07 (PL29N.225067)

- 3.3 Permission refused at No. 83 Iveragh Road for:

- Conversion of attic space to storage;
- Dormer windows to the side and rear;
- Change of roof profile.

3.4 It was stated under the reason for refusal that *“having regard to the location of the dwelling in relation to the surrounding residential development, it is considered that the construction of a dormer window in the side slope of a hipped roof would be unduly obtrusive and have a negative impact on the visual amenity and the established character of the adjoining residential area and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”*

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 2336/06 (PL29N.217769)

3.5 Permission granted at No. 29 Inishmaan Road for a 2 storey extension to side and extension to existing extension at rear of dwelling and associated site works.

3.6 Permission was also granted at No. 9 Inishmaan Road (Reg. Ref: 4608/06) for a single storey extension to side and rear with forward facing rooflight to side and attic conversion comprising roof window to rear and dormer first floor window to the side.

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: WEB1162/12

3.7 Permission granted at No. 156 Iveragh Road for a dormer to the rear.

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 4955/06

3.8 Permission granted at No. 140 Iveragh Road for rear and side dormers on condition that the side of the dormer to the side is plastered and painted to match the first floor of the front elevation of the house.

3.9 Dormers to the rear and side were also permitted at No. 101 Iveragh Road (Reg. Ref: 1409/07).

3.10 Dormers to the rear were permitted at No. 172 (Reg. Ref: 3435/04), No. 28 (Reg. Ref: 2659/08).

3.11 Permission was refused (Reg. Ref: 2524/10) at No. 87 for conversion of attic storage including altering the profile of the hipped roof to the side including a new velux roof light. It was stated under

the reason for refusal that “...the proposed alteration of the roof profile would have a detrimental impact on the character of the dwelling and would be incongruous with the adjoining dwelling and the established pattern of development in the vicinity. In addition, taking into regard the prominent corner location of the dwelling, the proposed development would create an imbalance across the two unit block, set an undesirable precedent for the further varied alterations of roof profiles in this area...”.

4.0 PLANNING AUTHORITY DECISION

4.1 Planning and technical reports

- 4.1.1 It is stated under the assessment of the application that the proposed rear dormer would be visible from the public having regard to its scale and the angle of the property to the road. It is stated that if a rear dormer is permitted, it should be reduced in scale by setting it down from the roof ridge by 200mm and back from the eaves 300mm.
- 4.1.2 It is also considered that the construction of a dormer in the side slope would be unduly obtrusive and would have a negative impact on the visual amenity and established character of the area having regard to its prominent location set at an angle to the public road.

4.2 Planning Authority Decision

- 4.2.1 Dublin City Council issued notification of decision to refuse permission for the following reason:

“Having regard to the location of the dwelling in relation to the surrounding residential development, it is considered that the construction of a dormer window in the side slope of a hipped roof, which would be required for access for any attic conversion, would be unduly obtrusive and have a negative impact on the established character of the adjoining residential area, thereby seriously injuring the amenities of property in the vicinity. The proposed development (rear and side dormers), would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”

5.0 GROUNDS OF APPEAL

5.1 A first party appeal against the Council's decision was submitted by the applicant. The grounds of appeal and main points raised in this submission can be summarised as follows:

- There have been a number of projects in the surrounding area that have been granted permission for dormer windows which provide a precedent for a similar development at the appeal site.
- When designing the proposed dormer, Condition 5 of Reg. Ref: 4955/06 was taken into account and subsequently followed.
- Wide spaces between dwellings at this location due to the adjacent one storey garage also permit a full view of the hipped roof – a precedent has been set at No. 140 for this type of development.
- The above points demonstrate that the proposed development is in keeping with the established character of the surrounding area.

6.0 RESPONSES/OBSERVATIONS TO GROUNDS OF APPEAL

6.1 Planning Authority response

6.1.1 No response.

7.0 POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Within the Dublin City Council Development Plan, 2011-2017, the appeal site is zoned Z1 where the objective is *“to protect, provide and improve residential amenity.”*

7.2 It is stated under Section 17.9.8 that applications for planning permission to extend dwellings will be granted provided that the proposed development:

- Has no adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwelling;
- Has no unacceptable effect on the amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjacent buildings in terms of privacy and access to daylight and sunlight.

7.3 Guidelines for residential extensions, including roof extensions, are set out in Appendix 25 of the Development Plan.

8.0 ASSESSMENT

8.1 In my opinion, the main issues to be addressed in this appeal are as follows:

- Visual impact;
- Precedent;
- Impact on residential amenity.

Visual impact

8.2 The main issue to be assessed in this appeal is the visual impact of the proposed dormer on the side slope of the hipped roof. In this regard, matters to be considered are the appearance of the dormer on the dwelling itself and within its immediate vicinity, together with the precedent set by similar developments. The appraisal of the proposed development should also have regard to the architectural quality of the housing estate in which it is set.

8.3 There is a large stock of semi-detached housing with common hipped roof in the Dublin City Council area that was constructed from the 1930's and 1950's (corporation housing). The hip ends to the roofs of these dwellings limit the potential for utilising the attic space. In the past, it would appear that there was no established approach for assessing the visual impact of side dormers and indeed within the Gaeltacht Park estate permissions have been granted and refused.

8.4 Appendix 25 of the current Development Plan introduces more detailed Guidelines for residential extensions from previous development plans. With respect to roof extensions, it is recognised that dormers can cause problems in the way the street is viewed as a whole if not treated sympathetically. It is also stated that *"the design of the dormer should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age and appearance of the existing building..."*.

8.5 Gaeltacht Park is an early example of semi-public housing that was developed in the 1920's/ 1930's for Irish speakers and was expanded to incorporate the housing needs of members of public

utility societies and the civil service. Whilst not a conservation area, the estate has an ordered layout with roads radiating from the central green space and a circular connecting road (Iveragh Road). In terms of architecture, the hipped roof is a consistent feature throughout the estate and the majority of these are intact. External brick and plaster finishes and fenestration, for the most part, are well retained throughout the estate. Overall, I would be of the view that the estate has matured without losing its original character.

- 8.6 It is considered by the Planning Authority that the side dormer would be unduly obtrusive and would have a negative impact on the established character of the residential area. In reaching this decision, it was noted that No. 143 lies at an angle to the public road and is therefore in a prominent location.
- 8.7 Having regard to the established character of Gaeltacht Park, which is an early example of the prevalent housing type in Dublin, I consider that the proposal would inordinately alter the appearance of the semi-detached dwellings and how they are viewed in the streetscape. I would also take the view that the installation of side dormers would appear unilateral and imbalanced when the semi-detached pair of dwellings are viewed together.
- 8.8 I concur that the convex positioning of the dwellings on this side of the road increases the visibility of side elevations and roof planes, and moreover, the scale of proposed side dormer does not appear subordinate to the side roof slope. Therefore, I conclude that the side dormer is unacceptable from a visual viewpoint in terms of its appearance on the roof plane, along with the semi-detached neighbour, and within the streetscape and the wider housing estate.

Precedent

- 8.9 The first party appellant's main argument is that a precedent has been established for side and rear dormers, most notably at No's. 101 and 140 Iveagh Road. It should be noted, however, that these dormers were granted permission by Dublin City Council under the tenure of the previous Development Plan. In my opinion, the proposed development should be assessed having regard to the policies, objectives and guidelines of the current Development Plan. As noted above, I consider that the proposed dormer to the side fails to comply with the Guidelines for Residential Extensions contained within Appendix 25 of the current Development Plan.
- 8.10 I would also refer to the previous determination by the Board at No. 83 Iveragh Road (Ref. PL29N.225067), where it was decided that *"the construction of a dormer window in the side slope of a hipped*

roof would be unduly obtrusive and have a negative impact on the visual amenity and the established character of the adjoining residential area.”

Impact on residential amenity

- 8.11 The purpose of the dormer on the hip end of the dwelling is to allow for adequate head room for the proposed stairs to the attic. It should be noted from the section drawing that the proposed attic will not have sufficient floor to ceiling height to qualify as habitable space. Therefore, the proposed alteration will not have the benefit of adding fully usable floorspace to the dwelling and on balance, there is no substantial benefit in terms of improved residential amenity that would warrant the visual alteration of the roofscape.
- 8.12 In terms impact on adjoining residential amenity, the rear facing dormer has a large glazed element that may give rise to the perception of overlooking from adjoining properties to the rear. It should be noted that there are dwellings to the rear as close as 20m from the dwelling on the appeal site. If the Board is minded to grant permission for the rear-facing dormer only, I recommend that it is fitted with obscure glazing. The Planning Authority also recommended that it be reduced in scale if permission is granted. However, it would be difficult to access the attic via stairs without the provision of a side dormer and therefore the rear dormer may become unnecessary.

Appropriate Assessment

- 8.13 Having regard to the nature and scale of the development proposed and to the nature of the receiving environment, namely a suburban and fully serviced location, no appropriate assessment issues arise.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 It is considered that the proposed development should be refused for the reasons and considerations hereunder.

REASONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Having regard to the location of the dwelling within an established residential development, it is considered that the construction of a dormer window in the side slope of a hipped roof to provide access for an attic conversion, would give rise to an imbalanced appearance with the adjoining semi-detached dwelling that would form a visually obtrusive and incongruous feature within the streetscape. The proposed development would, therefore, set an undesirable precedent for similar development and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Donal Donnelly
Planning Inspector
Date: 10th February 2016