



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Inspector's Report PL29N.247962

---

<b>Development</b>	Construction of a first floor extension to the front and rear to include two bedrooms and associated site works.
<b>Location</b>	No. 42 Willow Park Crescent, Dublin 11
<b>Planning Authority</b>	Dublin City Council
<b>Planning Authority Reg. Ref.</b>	4110/16
<b>Applicant(s)</b>	Pamela Walsh
<b>Type of Application</b>	Permission
<b>Planning Authority Decision</b>	Refuse permission
<b>Type of Appeal</b>	First Party
<b>Appellant(s)</b>	Pamela Walsh
<b>Observer(s)</b>	Ciarán Burke
<b>Date of Site Inspection</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> April 2017
<b>Inspector</b>	Donal Donnelly

## 1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located on Willow Park Crescent between Finglas and Ballymun approximately 5km north of Dublin City Centre. The site is within an extensive residential area of over 1 sq.km. located to the north of Glasnevin Avenue (R103). There is an even density of predominately semi-detached dwellings throughout this area.
- 1.2. Willow Park Crescent comprises mostly of single storey units in semi-detached pairs located around a central green space. Many of the original hipped roof dwellings have been altered with the addition of frontal projections, rear and side extensions, dormer windows and amended rendering and fenestration.
- 1.3. No. 42 is situated on the northern side of the green space. The dwelling retains its original hipped roof shared with the semi-detached dwelling to the west. There is a single storey annex to the rear and a flat roof garage to the side. The stated area of the dwelling is 91.2 sq.m. and the site area is given as 529 sq.m.
- 1.4. The dwellings either side of No. 42 have been altered by way of a single storey rear extension and rear dormer to No. 44 and the replacement of the hip end with a gable and installation of a rear dormer to No. 40.

## 2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Planning permission is sought for the reconstruction of the existing roof to include a raised ridge height to incorporate dormer window to the front and first floor extension to the rear accommodating two bedrooms and bathroom.

## 3.0 Planning Authority Decision

### 3.1. Decision

- 3.1.1. Dublin City Council issued notification of decision to refuse permission for the proposed development for the following reason:

*“It is considered that changing the roof profile of the house as proposed and increasing the height of the ridgeline and the provision of a dormer window to the front of the property would be out of character with the existing dwelling and*

*surrounding properties. It is therefore considered that the proposed works would seriously injure the visual amenities of the area, would result in an undesirable precedent for further such development, would depreciate the value of property in the vicinity and is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.”*

### **3.2. Planning Authority Reports**

- 3.2.1. The recommendation to refuse permission, as outlined in the Planner’s Report, reflects the decision of the Planning Authority.
- 3.2.2. It is stated under the assessment of the application that there is serious concern regarding the increased height of the ridgeline and the dormer window to the front. This is considered to be out of character with the existing dwelling and surrounding properties. As such, the proposal would result in an undesirable precedent for further such development, would depreciate the value of property in the vicinity and is contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.
- 3.2.3. It is noted that there is no record of planning permission for the dormer at No. 18 Willow Park Crescent that was referred to by the applicant.

### **4.0 Planning History**

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 2617/06

- 4.1. Permission granted at No. 44 Willow Park Crescent for the removal of an existing flat roof to rear and replacement with new hipped style to match existing house; the provision of six new velux rooflights to either side of roof (none to front); and porthole to rear.

Dublin City Council Reg. Ref: 3672/07

- 4.2. Permission granted at No. 46 for the extension and conversion to the existing attic space and the construction of a single storey extension to the rear. The development included alterations to the existing roof to provide for 3 no. roof lights to front elevation, gable end wall detail and flat roof detail to rear of proposed roof.

- 4.3. Permission granted at No. 56 for an attic conversion and single storey extension to include removal of hipped roof to the side and construction of new gable wall, dormer window to the rear and roof lights to the front, and conversion of the attic space.

## 5.0 Policy Context

### 5.1. Development Plan

- 5.1.1. Within the Dublin City Council Development Plan, 2016-2022, the appeal site is zoned Z1, where the objective is *“to protect, provide and improve residential amenity.”*
- 5.1.2. It is stated under Section 16.10.12 that applications for planning permission to extend dwellings will only be granted where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the proposal will:
- Not have an adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwelling;
  - Not adversely affect amenities enjoyed by the occupants of adjacent buildings in terms of privacy, access to daylight and sunlight.
- 5.1.3. Guidelines for residential extensions are included in Appendix 17. It is recognised in Section 17.11 that the roofline of the building one of its most dominant features and any proposal to change the shape, pitch, cladding or ornament of a roof should be carefully considered.

### 5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

- 5.2.1. The South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary SPA is location approximately 5.25km to the south-east of the appeal site.

## 6.0 The Appeal

### 6.1. Grounds of Appeal

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

- Reg. Ref: 2474/13 at No. 161 Jamestown Road, Finglas clearly shows an increase in height of the ridge by approximately 600mm.
- Ridgeline at No. 36 Willow Park Crescent has been raised significantly, establishing a precedent on the same line of buildings.
- Rear of No. 40 Willow Park Crescent has water tank enclosure above ridgeline.
- A large number of properties in the area have attics converted and many have dormers to the front.
- Cedarwood Park has 44 bungalows constructed contemporary to the subject property and 21 of these have additional dormers to the front.
- No's. 34A, 36, 38, 40, 46, 56, 58 and 60 have attic conversions that include rooflights to the front and these form a variation in style and character along this line of bungalows.
- A ridgeline increase and front dormer window, together with the additional first floor have been permitted at No. 32.
- No's. 2, 4, 20, 39 and 46 Willow Park Crescent demonstrate clearly that the provision of a dormer is not in fact out of character with surrounding properties.
- Proposal is reflective of the now varied character of the area and constitutes a sustainable and inclusive design as defined in the Development Plan (Para. 16.2.1.3).
- Immediately north of the proposed extension there are 2-storey houses, some of which have attic extensions, that contribute to the varied nature in the vicinity.

- With regard to Section 16.2.2.3, the proposed extension is integrated with the surrounding area having taken design characteristics from established and previously permitted alterations and extensions.
- There are a large number of dormers and front extensions in the area and the proposal is deemed to be subordinate to the existing building. The addition of a larger dormer style window to the southerly elevation is beneficial for environmental considerations.
- Windows on the west elevation are for the purposes of admitting evening light to the proposed bedroom and landing area.
- Proposal is for a modest 64 sq.m. extension that will have no effect on the building's footprint or green space.

## 6.2. Planning Authority Response

6.2.1. No response.

## 6.3. Observations

6.3.1. An observation on the appeal was received from the resident of No. 44 Willow Park Crescent which adjoins the appeal site to the west. The main points raised in this submission are summarised as follows:

- Observer has no objection to neighbour carrying out extension that is in keeping with the amenity of the area but does object to the raised ridge height to incorporate a dormer window.
- Observer also objects to the invasion of privacy to via overlooking windows to the rear.
- Main ridgeline of No. 161 Jamestown Road (Reg. Ref: 2474/13) was not raised and the hipped annex to the front was only raised and does not impact on the adjoining house.
- Increased ridgeline at No. 36 Willow Park Crescent (Reg. Ref: 1412/87) is to cover a water tank and does not form part of a dormer.

- No. 32A Willow Park Crescent is a detached property and Reg. Ref: 1188/08 makes no reference to raising the ridgeline or to a dormer.
- The properties referenced by the applicant include 21 with front dormers on Cedarwood Park; eight with front rooflights on Willow Park Crescent; five with front dormers on Willow Park Crescent; and a property with a side dormer at Cedarwood Grove – none of these properties have built dormers above the existing ridgeline.
- Proposed windows on the west elevation would overlook observer’s kitchen, rear living room and rear bedroom windows.

## 7.0 Assessment

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

- Development principle;
- Visual impact;
- Impact on residential amenity; and
- Appropriate Assessment.

### 7.2. Development principle

7.2.1. The appeal site is zoned Z1, where the objective is *“to protect, provide and improve residential amenities”*. The proposed extension of the dwelling would therefore be acceptable in principle subject to an assessment of the proposal under relevant Development Plan criteria.

### 7.3. Visual Impact

7.3.1. It is considered under Dublin City Council’s reason for refusal that the proposal to increase the height of the ridgeline and provide a frontal dormer would be out of character with the existing dwelling and surrounding properties.

7.3.2. The proposed development involves the construction of a new hipped roof extension above the existing rear annex and continuing to the front of the dwelling to form a new dormer. The new structure will be contained within the footprint of the existing

dwelling and will allow for habitable accommodation to be provided at first floor level. The new hipped roof will rise to a height of approximately 1.23m above the existing ridge of the dwelling.

7.3.3. It is stated in Section 16.10.12 of the Development Plan that residential extensions should not have an adverse impact on the scale and character of the dwelling and should be subordinate in terms of scale. Appendix 17 of the Development Plan sets out principles that should be followed for new extensions. In general, an extension should not dominate the existing building and should normally be of an overall shape and size to harmonise with the existing house and adjoining buildings. The original appearance should be the reference point for any consideration of change and features such as windows and doors on the new extension should relate to those on the original building.

7.3.4. With respect to roof extensions, it is noted that the roofline of a building is one of its most dominant features and it is important to carefully consider any proposal to change its shape, pitch, cladding or ornament. The following principles are set out for roof extensions:

- *The design of the dormer should reflect the character of the area, the surrounding buildings and the age and appearance of the existing building;*
- *Dormer windows should be visually subordinate to the roof slope, enabling a large proportion of the original roof to remain visible;*
- *Any new window should relate to the shape, size, position and design of the existing doors and windows on the lower floors;*
- *Roof materials should be covered in materials that match or complement the main building;*
- *Dormer windows should be set back from the eaves level to minimise their visual impact and reduce the potential for overlooking of adjoining properties.*

7.3.5. I would share the Planning Authority's concerns regarding the increased height of the ridgeline and the scale and proportions of the dormer structure to the front. As noted above, the ridgeline of the new first floor extension will be 1.23m above the existing ridgeline and not 0.6m as noted in the Planner's Report. For an extension to remain subordinate to the main dwelling, it should be no larger or higher than the



existing. In this case, the proposed extension will dominate the existing dwelling and will form an obtrusive feature in the streetscape. The extension will be clearly visible from street level above the existing ridgeline and at an oblique view the rear half of the roof will be discernible. The dormer structure will occupy most of the front roof slope of the dwelling, and furthermore, the window fails to align with the window at ground level.

- 7.3.6. It should be noted that the prominence of these dwellings is increased by the fact that they face onto a wide open space, meaning that the proposed extension would be visible at distances of up to 100m along the southern side of Willow Park Crescent. It would appear that no other ridgelines have been raised to such a degree within surrounding dwellings fronting onto the greenspace. Any frontal alterations have been carried out in a sensitive manner that respects the scale of the existing dwelling and neighbouring structures.
- 7.3.7. The appeal submission focuses on examples elsewhere in the area where roof ridges have been raised and frontal dormers installed. In my opinion, any proposal should be treated on its own merits and I would also note that many surrounding extensions would have been permitted during the tenure of previous development plans. Notwithstanding this, I consider that there is no precedent within the immediate context for such an overly scaled extension that fails to harmonise with character of the existing dwelling, the neighbouring semi-detached dwelling and streetscape surrounding the green space.

#### **7.4. Impact on residential amenity**

- 7.4.1. The resident of the dwelling to the west of the appeal site objects to the visual impact that the proposed development would have on their property and also to the invasion of their privacy via overlooking windows to the rear.
- 7.4.2. I would be satisfied that the proposed development within the footprint of the existing dwelling would have no impacts on adjoining property in terms of overshadowing or overbearing effects.
- 7.4.3. A west facing window is proposed to serve a first floor bedroom and I would agree with the Observer that this opening would overlook their property. If the Board is minded to grant permission for the proposal, I recommend that this window be

omitted, as the bedroom will be served by a north facing window. Other side facing windows on both elevations serve landings and a bathroom and a condition can be attached to any grant of permission requiring these openings to be fitted with obscure glass.

## **7.5. Appropriate Assessment**

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

## **8.0 Recommendation**

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

## **9.0 Reasons and Considerations**

The proposed first floor extension, rising significantly above the existing ridgeline, and including the provision of an overly scaled dormer window to the front of the existing dwelling, would be out of character and would fail to harmonise with the existing dwelling, the adjoining dwelling and the streetscape and would, thereby, seriously injure the amenities of the area by reason of its visual dominance. 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

19<sup>th</sup> April 2017