



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL04.248919

Development	Alterations and extension to existing dwelling, upgrade of effluent treatment system and percolation area and associated site works.
Location	Knocknagallagh, Bandon, Co. Cork
Planning Authority	Cork County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	16/06770
Applicant	Damien Feiriteur
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Grant subject to conditions
Type of Appeal	1 st Party v. condition
Appellant	Damien Feiriteur
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	23/10/17
Inspector	Pauline Fitzpatrick

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site, which has a stated area of 0.31 hectares, is accessed from a minor local road in the townland of Knocknagallagh c. 5km to the south-west of Bandon. The site, which is rectangular in shape, is elevated above the road with the existing single storey hipped roofed dwelling cut into the site resulting in a steep rock faced embankment to the rear. Steps provide access to the lower front garden area.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The application was lodged with the planning authority on the 04/11/16 with further plans and details received 02/06/17 and 22/06/17 following a further information request dated 05/01/17.

The proposal entails the demolition of the bay window area to the front elevation and sun room to the side, and construction of extensions to front and side providing for a lower ground floor level to the front elevation. It is also proposed to convert the attic into habitable space to be served by roof lights. Alterations to all elevations and the roof profile are proposed.

The external finishes are to be a mix of render with stone detailing and floor to ceiling glazing to the north-eastern corner.

A garage is proposed to the side connected to the dwelling by a carport.

Landscaping plans are provided.

The existing effluent treatment system on the site is to be upgraded with a completed site characterisation report provided. No water was recorded in the trial hole with a T value of 29.19 and P value of 22.03 calculated.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Grant permission subject to conditions. Of note:

Condition 2: design to be amended to include omission of lower ground floor in its entirety and extension to front elevation to be single storey with habitable accommodation over.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

- 3.2.1. The 1st Planner's report dated 05/01/17 states that there are concerns regarding the visual impact of the proposal due to the scale and design. The house is in an elevated area cut into the hillside. There is limited scope to extend the dwelling to the side therefore consideration can be given to an extension to the front. That proposed extends to 9 metres and is excessive. Considerable cutting is proposed which would necessitate retaining walls and creation of another platform. The comments in the Area Engineer's report detailed below are noted. A request for further information is recommended.

The 2nd report dated 26/06/17 following FI considers that the response does not adequately or satisfactorily address the issues arising. The proposed extension to the front is not fully integrated with the house, it has its own separate entrance, staircase etc. and there are concerns regarding the potential use. The changes to the roof profile, carport and garage are considered acceptable. The site can accommodate a single storey extension to the front. The lower ground floor extension should be omitted. A grant of permission subject to conditions is recommended.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

The Area Engineer's report dated 20/12/16 recommends clarification with respect to the site suitability assessment undertaken and design of waste water treatment system. The 2nd report dated 19/06/17 following FI has no objection subject to conditions.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

None

3.4. Third Party Observations

None

4.0 Planning History

011058 – permission granted for dwelling and garage on the site.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Cork County Development Plan

The site is within a rural area designated as being under strong urban influence.

5.2. Natural Heritage Designations

None in the vicinity.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The submission by OLS Consulting Engineers and Project Management Ltd. on behalf of the applicant against condition 2 attached to the planning authority's notification of decision can be summarised as follows:

- The design is in keeping with the area.
- The front of the existing dwelling is filled ground with a considerable step/height between the existing floor level and the lower garden. The lower level living area is proposed to make use of the lower level garden area to provide for a safe play area.
- The use of the roof space would not have a visual impact.
- It is acknowledged that the landscaping needs to be developed further to provide for screening of the proposal.

Note: Appeal accompanied by visual presentation of proposal.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

None

6.3. **Observations**

None

7.0 **Assessment**

- 7.1. The 1st party appeal is against condition 2 attached to the planning authority's notification of decision to grant permission requiring the omission of the lower ground floor level. It presents as two storey to the front and eastern elevation with full height glazing proposed at the north-eastern corner.
- 7.2. I have no objection to the principle of the demolition of part of the dwelling and its extension, including conversion of the attic into further habitable accommodation, and alterations to the roof profile. In my opinion the substantive issue pertains to the lower ground floor level proposed to the front elevation and its visual impact. I am satisfied that the determination of the application as if it had been made to it in the first instance would not be warranted.
- 7.3. The site, whilst having an innate rural quality, is not within an area designated as a high value landscape in the current County Development Plan. Although the site is elevated above the road the undulating topography and hedgerows in the area largely limit long range views with the site visible for a short distance when travelling in both directions along the local road serving the site and from the local road to the north-east. Distant views are available from the local road to the north and north-west in the vicinity of Moneens townland but, by reason of the intervening distance, the site detail is indistinct.
- 7.4. In my opinion the said lower ground level in terms of the extent of cut that will be required to accommodate same and its treatment, including the full height glazing detail to the corner would not represent a level of visual intrusion over that as currently exists as to raise substantive concerns that would justify its omission. Certainly were the site to be located within a high value landscape then the

additional degree of visual intrusion may be an issue. As noted previously this is not the case in this instance.

- 7.5. Additional perimeter and site landscaping as set out in the details submitted to the planning application on the 22/06/17 would assist in screening the extension from views to the north and north-west.

AA – Screening

Having regard to the location of the site and the nature and scale of the proposed development no Appropriate Assessment issues arise and it is not considered that the proposed development would be likely to have a significant effect individually or in combination with other plans or projects on a European site.

8.0 Recommendation

I recommend that the planning authority be directed to omit condition 2.

9.0 Decision

Having regard to the nature of the condition the subject of the appeal, the Board is satisfied that the determination by the Board of the relevant application as if it had been made to it in the first instance would not be warranted and, based on the reasons and considerations set out below, directs the said Council under subsection (1) of section 139 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 to REMOVE condition number 2 and the reason therefor.

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the existing dwelling on the site and the absence of any scenic designation in the current County Development Plan, it is considered that the proposed extension to the front (northern) elevation, by reason of its scale, nature and design, would not be visually obtrusive and would not seriously injure

the visual amenities of the area. The proposed development would, therefore, not be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Pauline Fitzpatrick
Senior Planning Inspector

November, 2017