



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL06S.249203

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| Development | Dormer extension to the rear, window to side gable, 2 windows to rear dormer extension, extension to side gable wall and hipped roof to side. |
| Location | 11 Johnsbridge Avenue, Lucan, Co. Dublin. |
| Planning Authority | South Dublin County Council. |
| Planning Authority Reg. Ref. | SD17B/0231 |
| Applicant(s) | Muhammed Imran |
| Type of Application | Permission |
| Planning Authority Decision | Refuse Permission |
| Type of Appeal | First Party vs. refusal |
| Appellant(s) | Muhammed Imran. |
| Observer(s) | Catherine O'Donovan |
| Date of Site Inspection | 25 th January 2018 |
| Inspector | Ciara Kellett |

1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The appeal site is located in Johnsbridge Avenue, Lucan, Co. Dublin. Johnsbridge Avenue is c.2km south of Lucan Main Street and c.1km south of the N4 Road. It is located in the large residential area of south Lucan.
- 1.2. The appeal site, no. 11 Johnsbridge Avenue, is located midway along the road on the western side. It is one half of a semi-detached pair of dwellings. The observer lives in the adjoining dwelling no.9. Dwellings no.13 and 15 lie to the north and are stepped forward of the building line of the other dwellings along the road. All of the dwellings in the general area have hipped roofs and similar material finishes.
- 1.3. Appendix A includes maps and photos.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. Permission is sought for works at attic level. It is proposed to convert the attic space into a study, playroom and home office. A rear dormer with two vertical windows is proposed.
- 2.2. The dormer will extend beyond the line of the hipped roof. This will result in a change to the roof profile to the front of the house, from a hipped roof to a gable with a mini-hip.
- 2.3. The converted attic area is stated as being 27sq.m. A circular window on the gable wall is proposed at attic level.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

The Planning Authority decided to refuse permission for one reason as follows:

1. The proposed design changes to the roof design and dormer window are seriously out of character with both the existing dwelling and those within the environs and do not comply with the design guidelines for extensions as set out in the South Dublin County Council 'House Extension Design Guide'

referenced in the current South Dublin County Council Development Plan. The proposed development would therefore be materially inconsistent with the Council's Development Plan and would seriously injure the amenities of property in the vicinity by way of visual impact.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. The Planner's Report is the basis for the Planning Authority decision. It includes:

- Area is zoned RES '*To protect and/or improve residential amenity*'. Considers there are issues relating to visual impact which are requested to be addressed in order for the proposed extension to be in compliance with Council policy in relation to extensions.
- Considers the proposed changes to the roof are out of character with both the existing dwelling and those in the environs and do not comply with the design guidelines as set out in the County Development Plan.
- Notes the rear dormer extends from the ridge line of the existing roof and is such that the main feature of the roof would be obscured. The dormer does not comply with the design guidelines as set out in the County Development Plan.
- Concludes that the proposal would not fully integrate with the pattern of development in the area. Proposed design changes to the roof and dormer are out of character with the existing dwelling and properties in the vicinity and do not comply with the design guidelines. Proposal would seriously injure the amenities of property in the area by way of visual impact and should be refused.
- Recommends a refusal of permission.

The decision is in accordance with the Planner's recommendations.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Surface Water Drainage – No objection subject to conditions.

3.3. Third Party Observations

A letter of objection was received from the neighbour in the adjoining dwelling. This is addressed in Section 6 below.

4.0 Planning History

4.1. There is no planning history associated with the subject site. A number of planning applications pertain to property in the vicinity, in particular in No.10 Johnsbridge Avenue, which is directly across the road:

- **Reg. Ref. SD17A/0051:** Permission was granted in April 2017 for an attic conversion with a change in roof profile to the side of the dwelling. This side dormer was reduced to 3m wide by condition and is set back from the roof building line and below the ridgeline.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Development Plan

5.1.1. Under the County Development Plan 2016 – 2022, the site is zoned '**RES: To protect and/or improve residential amenity**'.

Chapter 2 refers to housing and Chapter 11 refers to Implementation. The Council has also produced guidance in the form of 'House Extension Design Guide'.

5.1.2. Sections 2.4.1 of Chapter 2 consider residential extensions.

Policy H18 Objective 1 states: *To favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to the protection of residential and visual amenities and compliance with the standards set out in Chapter 11 Implementation and the guidance set out in the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide, 2010 (or any superseding guidelines).*

5.1.3. Section 11.3.3 considers Additional Accommodation. Section 11.3.3(i) states with respect to Extensions: *The design of residential extensions should accord with the South Dublin County Council House Extension Guide (2010) or any superseding standards.*

5.1.4. The House Extension Design Guide produced by the Council provides advice on different types of extensions. Chapter 4 is entitled *Elements of Good Extension Design*. Of relevance to the subject application is the advice provided for attic conversions. It states (inter alia):

- *Locate dormer windows below the ridge of the roof, even if the roof has a shallow pitch.*
- *Locate dormer windows as far back as possible from the eaves line (at least three tile courses).*
- *Relate dormer windows to the windows and doors below in alignment, proportion and character.*
- *In the case of a dormer window extension to a hipped roof, ensure it sits below the ridgelines of the existing roof and matches the materials used in the main house.*
- *Do not obscure the main ridge and eaves features of the roof, particularly in the case of an extension to the side of a hipped roof.*
- *Avoid extending the full width of the roof or right up to the gable ends – two small dormers on the same elevation can often be a suitable alternative to one large dormer.*
- *Avoid dormer windows that are overdominant in appearance or give the appearance of a flat roof.*
- *Avoid the use of flat-roofed dormer window extensions on houses with hipped rooflines.*

5.2. **Natural Heritage Designations**

The Rye Water Valley/Carlton SAC (Site Code 001398) is c.4km to the west.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The first party appealed against the planning authority's decision to refuse permission. In summary, it includes:

- States there have been similar developments granted full planning permission for removal of hipped roof and extension of gable wall and dormer extensions to the rear.
- 10 examples are provided of such developments throughout Lucan and Kingswood. Photos and images of the examples accompany the appeal.
- Notes the owner of the neighbouring property submitted an objection and highlighted three issues, which are responded to.
- *Issue 1:* Change in appearance of roof. Applicant does not believe that the proposed change will affect the appearance or value of no.9. Believe adequate evidence has been provided of where there are similar developments setting a precedent.
- *Issue 2:* Overlooking. The existing first floor windows of no.11 and all other neighbouring properties can view and overlook the neighbouring garden at no.9. Believe this is a non-issue when it comes to the installation of windows to the dormer extension.
- *Issue 3:* Noise. First time applicant has been made aware of any noise issues. Pump was installed due to lack of water pressure. Mitigation measures are proposed.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

The planning authority confirmed its decision and consider that the issues raised in the appeal have been considered in the planner's report.

6.3. Observers

An observation has been submitted by the owner of the adjoining dwelling, no.9 Johnsbridge Avenue. In summary, it includes:

- The proposal includes a change in the appearance of the front of the property, which drastically changes the appearance of both properties – not just their property but also the observers by virtue of being attached. This is not considered reasonable.
- It is a massive change to their property at roof height which is completely disproportionate.
- Observer's property will be dwarfed by this proposal and the two properties together will look lopsided and may negatively affect the value of her property.
- Proposal is not in keeping with the roof profile of the rest of the estate, and is a departure from what was built originally and later extended properties. Not aware of any other property on the estate with a similar roof profile.
- The scheme proposes two dormer windows to the rear which will overlook her property. Windows are intrusive due to their height and size and invade privacy.
- Subject to erratic noise issues when a pump kicks in. There was no pump or mechanical equipment installed in the attic when properties were first built. There appears to be no soundproofing between the two properties, and there is concern with what the noise will be like with constant movement in the attic space.

7.0 Assessment

The main issues in this appeal are those raised in the grounds of appeal and I am satisfied that no other substantive issues arise. The issue of appropriate assessment also needs to be addressed. The issues can be dealt with under the following headings:

- Residential and Visual Amenities
- Appropriate Assessment

7.1. Residential and Visual Amenities

- 7.1.1. The development is located in an area zoned RES: 'To protect and/or improve residential amenity'. In this zone, residential extensions to existing dwellings are considered an acceptable development in principle. Objective H18(1) states that the Council will favourably consider proposals to extend existing dwellings subject to protection of residential and visual amenities, and compliance with the standards set out in the South Dublin County Council House Extension Design Guide.
- 7.1.2. The area is characterised by well-established, medium density, two storey, semi-detached suburban type housing. The houses present a uniform look and have not been altered substantially by the occupiers. All of the roofs in the immediate vicinity are hipped, with the exception of the dwelling directly across the road. The roof of that dwelling has been altered. However, I note that the side dormer is more discreet than the subject proposal. It is in accordance with the Design Guidelines prepared by the Council.
- 7.1.3. The Design Guidelines in reference to attic conversions advise that in the "*case of a dormer window extension to a hipped roof, ensure it sits below the ridgelines of the existing roof*" and "*Do not obscure the main ridge and eaves features of the roof, particularly in the case of an extension to the side of a hipped roof.*" I have reviewed the planning file of the development in no.10 Johnsbridge Avenue. I note that the permission included a condition to reduce the width of the side dormer to 3m, and to require it to sit below the ridgeline which complies with the Design Guidelines.
- 7.1.4. The current proposal for the subject site results in a change to the hipped roof, which obscures the features of the hipped roof and is over-dominant in appearance, which is contrary to the Design Guidelines.
- 7.1.5. I am of the opinion that to introduce a gable roof along the street would be to introduce a discordant element into the street. It would detract from the appearance and rhythm of hipped roof houses in a visually prominent location. It would be out of character with the area, over-dominant and would have a negative impact on the visual amenities of the area.
- 7.1.6. The observer expresses concern with potential overlooking from the two dormer windows proposed. I consider that in an urban environment some degree of overlooking should be expected. However, I am of the opinion that should the Board

consider granting permission, conditions could be appended to revise the window style such as introducing windows with louvres/angled glazing or opaque glazing.

7.1.7. Noise issues caused by mechanical equipment raised by the observer are not a planning matter in this instance.

7.1.8. In conclusion, I consider that the proposal would introduce a discordant element into the streetscape. The proposed design is not in accordance with the Design Guidelines produced by the Council, which are on a statutory footing due to objective H18(1) reference therein. I consider that the proposal would seriously injure the amenities of the area and of property in the vicinity and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

7.2. **Appropriate Assessment**

Having regard to the nature and scale of development proposed and to the nature of the receiving environment, namely an urban and fully serviced location, 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**

8.1. I recommend that planning permission should be refused for the reasons and considerations as set out below.

9.0 **Reasons and Considerations**

It is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its roof design, would be an inappropriate form of development and would be out of character at this location. The proposed extension would, therefore, seriously injure the amenities of the area and of property in the vicinity and would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Ciara Kellett
Inspectorate

26th January 2018