



An
Bord
Pleanála

Inspector's Report ABP-301270-18

Development	Ground floor extension to the front of house, internal alterations, and widening of vehicular entrance.
Location	No. 41 Rossbrook, Model Farm Road, Cork
Planning Authority	Cork City Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	17/37712
Applicant(s)	Christine McCarthy
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse
Type of Appeal	First Party
Appellant(s)	Christine McCarthy
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	20 th June, 2018
Inspector	Kevin Moore

1.0 Site Location and Description

1.1. No. 41 Rossbrook is a two-storey detached house within an established residential estate to the south of Model Farm Road on the west side of Cork City. The site is flanked by existing two-storey detached houses.

2.0 Proposed Development

2.1. The proposed development would comprise the provision of a ground floor extension of 8.19 square metres to the front of the house, the making of some internal alterations to the house and the widening of the existing vehicular entrance to the property.

2.2. Details submitted with the application include letters explaining the need for the extension to meet the requirements of the applicant's son.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

On 26th February, 2018, Cork City Council decided to refuse permission for the development for two reasons relating to the proposal being out of character with the existing pattern of residential development and the proposal endangering public safety by reason of traffic hazard.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. Planning Reports

The Planner noted the recent planning history relating to the site and in the vicinity, reports received and development plan provisions. It was noted that, in general, structures proposed forward of the building line are not considered acceptable. It was observed that, apart from one house in the estate (No. 12 Rossbrook), there are no extensions that step forward of the building line. In relation to No. 12, the Planner considered the impact of the extension to be relatively well screened. Concern was

expressed that the existing dwelling is not fully compliant with planning with regard to the extension to the rear. It is considered that the proposal appears to be more of a granny flat. Differences between the proposal and the extension at No. 12 were outlined. It was argued that the existing layout and extended and altered ground floor plans could be reconfigured to allow for an additional bedroom without the need for an extension forward of the building line. It was noted that the existing driveway is 3m in width and development plan provisions relating to vehicular entrance width were referenced. A refusal of permission for two reasons was recommended.

The Senior Executive Planner concurred with the Planner's conclusions and made revisions to the second reason for refusal recommended.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

The Drainage Engineer had no objection to the proposal.

The Roads Design Engineer submitted that, while there was no road safety concerns, the entrance should be kept to a maximum of 3m in accordance with development plan requirements and neighbouring properties.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

Irish Water had no objection to the proposal.

The Health and Safety Authority submitted that it did not advise against the granting of permission.

4.0 Planning History

TP98/22591

Permission was granted for the retention of a first floor dormer window.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. Cork City Development Plan 2015-2021

Zoning

The site is zoned 'ZO 4 Residential, Local Services and Institutional Uses' with the objective "to protect and provide for residential uses, local services, institutional uses, and civic uses ..."

Residential Extensions

The Plan states that the design and layout of extensions to houses should have regard to the amenities of adjoining properties particularly as regards sunlight, daylight and privacy. The character and form of the existing building should be respected and external finishes and window types should match the existing.

Extensions should:

- Follow the pattern of the existing building as much as possible;
- Be constructed with similar finishes and with similar windows to the existing building so that they will integrate with it;
- Roof form should be compatible with the existing roof form and character ...
- Care should be taken to ensure that the extension does not overshadow windows, yards or gardens or have windows in flank walls which would reduce the privacy of adjoining properties.

Residential Entrances

The Plan notes that the cumulative effect of removal of front garden walls and railings damages the character and appearance of suburban streets and roads. Consequently proposals for off street parking need to be balanced against loss of amenity. The removal of front garden walls and railings will not generally be permitted where they have a negative impact on the character of streetscapes (e.g. in Architectural Conservation Areas, Street Improvement Areas and other areas of architectural and historic character) or on the building itself e.g. a protected structure etc. Consideration will be given to the effect of parking on traffic flows, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and traffic generation. Where permitted, "drive-ins" should:

- Not have outward opening gates;
- Have a vehicular entrance not wider than 3m;
- In general, have a vehicle entrance not wider than 50 per cent of the width of the front boundary;

- Have an area of hard-standing (parking space of 2.5m x 5m);
- Inward-opening gates should be provided. Where space is restricted, the gates could slide behind a wall. Gates should not open outwards over public footpath/roadway;
- Suitably landscape the balance of the space;
- Other walls, gates, railing to be made good.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

The grounds of appeal may be synopsised as follows:

- The front extension will not unduly affect the existing visual amenity, residential amenity or streetscape at this location.
- The proposed widening of the entrance will not create any road safety problems or create a precedent for additional off-street parking.
- The overall proposal does not materially conflict with any stated objectives of the City Development Plan.

6.2. Planning Authority Response

I have no record of any response to the appeal from the planning authority.

7.0 Assessment

- 7.1. The immediate context of the proposed development is critical in assessing this appeal. I draw the attention of the Board to the development of the adjoining property to the east of No. 41, namely No. 42 Brookfield. This is a house that is undergoing significant change by way of new development (subject to Planning Permission 16/37023), being a dwelling that was originally in keeping with the form and character of flanking houses. The changes have included significant alteration to the character of the house in terms of its presentation to the public realm. I note that the entrance to this property has been widened also. The Board should further note that

there is not a rigid building line at this location but rather a staggered building line following the routing of the estate road. The Board will acknowledge the layout of houses immediately to the west of the site for example.

- 7.2. The proposed development includes a very minor extension to the front of the house at ground floor level to meet specific needs of a family member. Its impact, in visual terms, in terms of the effect on any established building line, and in the context of the redevelopment of the adjoining house to the east, would be negligible and, indeed, could not in any reasonable manner be seen to be incompatible with the form and character of development in this area, an area that is evidently undergoing continuous change.
- 7.3. With regard to the proposed changes to the entrance, I first acknowledge that there is widening of entrances occurring within this estate. More importantly, I note that the proposed change would have no impact on traffic safety. This is acknowledged by the planning authority's Roads Engineer and the Planner has not demonstrated in any way how the proposal could constitute a traffic hazard. In addition, the proposed change would continue to facilitate off-street parking within the curtilage of this site.
- 7.4. The proposed development is wholly in keeping with the provisions set out in the Cork City Development Plan as they relate to extensions to dwellings. To this end it is noted:
- The development would follow the pattern of existing development.
 - It would be constructed with similar finishes and with similar windows to the existing building in a manner that integrates with it;
 - The roof form would be compatible with the existing roof form and character of the established house; and
 - The extension would not overshadow windows or reduce the privacy of adjoining properties.
- 7.5. In conclusion, in light of the ongoing changes within the estate of Rossbrook, the form and character of the proposed changes, and the minimal effect these changes would actually have in terms of visual impact, building line, and traffic safety, I cannot reasonably conclude that the proposed development would be out of character with the pattern of residential development in this area or constitute a traffic hazard.

8.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission is granted in accordance with the following reasons, considerations and conditions.

9.0 Reasons and Considerations

Having regard to the form and character of the established dwelling on the site, to the compatible design and limited scale of the proposed development, and to the pattern of development change that has evolved with residential properties in the immediate vicinity of the site, it is considered that the proposed development would not adversely impact on the visual amenity of the streetscape, would be acceptable in terms of traffic safety and convenience, and would otherwise be in accordance with the provisions of the current Cork City Development Plan. The proposed development would, therefore, be in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

10.0 Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions. Where such conditions require details to be agreed with the planning authority, the developer shall agree such details in writing with the planning authority prior to commencement of development and the development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the agreed particulars.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The external finishes of the proposed extension shall be agreed in writing with the planning authority prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

3. The disposal of surface water shall comply with the requirements of the planning authority for such works and services.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure a proper standard of development.

Kevin Moore
Senior Planning Inspector

25th June 2018